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AN HOUR OF SPAIN

AN HOUR OF
SPAIN
Between 1560 and 1590

By
AZORIN
of the Real Academia Española

Translated by
ALICE RALEIGH

With an Introduction by
SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

LONDON
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LTD.
BROADWAY HOUSE, CARTER LANE, E.C.
1930

The hidden keynote of this little book is depth of feeling, sounding from within for those who have ears to hear. Simplicity and sincerity are its natural overtones.

If I may make a humble suggestion, not more than a few of these sketches should be read at one time. Though they seem at moments to have been carelessly tossed off (the author himself calls them *rasgos*), they are delicate little things, they cannot be perceived *en masse*. When Dick Swiviller asked the Marchioness if she had ever tasted beer, and when she replied "I had a sip of it once," he said: "She has *never* tasted it! It *can't* be tasted in a sip!"

These little papers are not beer, but Spanish liqueur—they can be tasted only "in sips."

TRANSLATOR.

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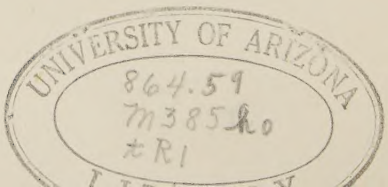
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La science est un moyen certain et puissant d'action sur le réel ; mais les forces psychiques, morales et religieuses ne nous permettent pas moins de nous mesurer avec lui et de le faire nôtre.

Emile Boutroux, *William James*. París, 1911, p. 87.

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PREFACE

BY

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

Is not this the first time in the history of letters when an Academic speech is found worth translating? But then no one but the Spanish master who hides his name under the pseudonym *Azorín* would have thought of turning his reception speech in the Spanish Academy into a series of pen pictures linked together not merely by being, so to speak, hung together on the same wall, and dealing with connected subjects and drawn by the same hand, but still more deeply and intimately by being bathed in the same atmosphere which makes them all one in the sense in which rose bushes and flower beds, fruit trees and grass lawns are made one garden by the feeling of common life which they emanate.

The new Academician's duty was to outline the biography, analyse the work and sing the praises of his predecessor. Who was his predecessor? "A politician and a man of the world." But Azorín adds that this man of the world "does not make a claim to scholarship nor does he boast of knowing the secrets of the literary art". So what is to be done? Azorín knows. He knows that an Academician, even with as scanty a bag as his predecessor had, is a man for all that and he draws a delightful portrait of him as he lived—lives, for Azorín is always in the present—so that, instead of reading his volumes and wading through his years of office, he shows him to us smiling and bowing before a handsome woman. And when we are absorbed in our enjoyment of this picture, Azorín quietly asks "Where are we? . . . Are we in the Spain of the nineteenth century or in that of yore? What is time and what is eternity?" and quietly, without thunder and prophecy, he wafts through the airy picture as Alice through the looking glass and takes us

with him soaring through space and time all over the lands and centuries of Spain. Where are we? What is he describing? Nothing. Anything. A king in his palace, a nobleman in his country seat ; Avila of the Knights ; a monk writing his treatise on prayer ; sheep ; a mountain ; flowers ; sunlit surfaces ; deep shadows ; the Basque country ; Castile ; Catalonia ; simple and natural emotions—And all this with a sure hand, a delicate handling of effects, a reticence which knows to leave off just before the wave of life is going to break away and lose its ripe beauty for ever and dissolve into its logical foam. "The old gentleman, melancholy, feeling a painful oppression on his chest, rises. A hand has alighted on the door handle. The door is turning. . . ."

It is a self-denying and exacting art, even more so than that exquisite mastery over words and silences which made Anatole France famous. For the Frenchman's reticence was one of style and form. He left things unsaid but not

unmeant, not unachieved, not unobserved. Azorín's reticence is one of fact. He turns away before the end. He leaves the theatre in the middle of the second act—or even earlier. Or he turns in at any inconspicuous moment of the play and watches one and a half scenes and lets the rest—beginning and end—to be imagined in freedom or left in the vague world of the unimagined, thus tasting a mere sidelight, as if it was the texture of life that mattered and not the full, somewhat square and matter-of-fact shape of it.

Such is the masterly hand, such is the technique, wherewith eternity has been caught in this Hour of Spain.

Señores académicos :

Let my first words be—they ought to be—of gratitude. Cordially I thank you all for your favourable votes. You represent the Spanish literary tradition, modestly I have tried to serve that tradition. Among you, whom I admire, whom I love, I find myself surrounded by friends. The love of the workman for his profession is what matters most in an occupation, whether "liberal" or "mechanical". Whatever be the work we do, great or small, the essential thing is to do it with ardent affection. A modest workman in a poor shop, enamoured of his art, toiling with fervour, is, independently of what he achieves, as much to be admired as the most renowned artist. You love our native letters, you know the beauty and purity of the language, you are preoccupied with the problems of art. How could I not feel myself satisfied

among you? Often, in the small Spanish towns, I have watched the artificers of iron, wood, and wool, in their workshops. In the modern world, minute and patient handwork is rapidly disappearing. But in those workshops of the little towns, I admired the love, the minute care and the heartfelt perseverance of the artizans. Frequently the whole family of the workman shared his labour. And the atmosphere of the workshop, so intimate, was one with the traditional atmosphere of the whole town. Tradition, from fathers to sons, had formed these trades, had slowly created and accumulated the practices, usages and secrets which dominate their material. And it was the qualities of these modest workmen, this traditional atmosphere, this fervour in work, that I, an onlooker, desired for the literary artist. Literary work ought to be perseverance and love. Among the fleeting and somewhat frivolous tastes of the moment, you represent the continuity of the aesthetic ideal, you represent reverence for the fruits of the spirit. They are represented too, outside our

circle, by writers whom we all admire and respect. This compact meeting holds men from every kind of origin. The academician whom I succeed came from the sphere of politics.

D. Juan Navarro Reverter was a politician and a man of the world. I can see him now—and it was the last time I saw him—in a worldly *salon*. Tall, elegant, graceful, he was walking with tiny steps over the waxed floor. The surroundings were vast. It was near the sea. A murmur of light talk filled the spacious room. Moving to and fro among the *caballeros* were beautiful and refined *señoras*. D. Juan Navarro Reverter, smiling, salutes a beautiful lady. The lips of the *caballero* have the perennial smile of one with whom courtesy is an instinct. His hair is snowy ; at his years he feels paternal and indulgent towards careless youth. D. Juan bows gallantly and takes between his hands the hand of the pretty lady. He retains it between his hands, he is gently caressing it. And meanwhile, he smiles and talks. A difficult art is the art of conversation. D. Juan Navarro

Reverter was a versed and delicate talker. He lived much. He was minister four or five times. He travelled the world. On his travels he made observations which he gathered together in a book. When his arid financial studies gave him time, he enjoyed reading the poets. On a poet, a contemporary of his own, he wrote another book. But D. Juan does not plume himself on erudition, or boast of knowing the hidden secrets of literary art. With ease, pleasantly, he is conversing with the charming lady before him. A murmur of light talk fills the *salon*. The air of the sea comes in through the great windows. The time glides on, smoothly. And at this moment, this moment of life, facing the sea, before the immensity of its blue, beneath the blue of the sky, the spirit is carried away. We let go of our real surroundings. The spirit is carried away in the very midst of this mundane cohort, in the very vortex of frivolous gaiety. The present world disappears. Loosed for a moment from real things, the imagination takes flight. Where

are we? What do the immense sea and sky suggest to us? Are we in Spain of the twentieth century or of a century gone by? What is time and what is eternity? Eternity! The sound of music begins in the drawing-room, a sonata of Beethoven. Men are as the shadows of shadows. They rise in the world for a moment and they disappear. In eternity, seen from a point outside time (if we may so speak), we, men of the twentieth century, and the men for instance of the sixteenth century, are one and the same thing. Looked back upon from the future, our ancestors of four centuries ago will be seen on a level with ourselves. Their struggles and ours are the same. Here at sunset, before the sea, withdrawn from the bustle of the world, we feel ourselves by the side of the men of the sixteenth century. The *damas* and *caballeros* of the *salon* disappear. Other living beings, now vanished in history, come back. It is the thought of time and of eternity which has worked the miracle. What is it that rises first before the eyes of the spirit? The spectacle

is about to begin. The stage curtain—on the stage of history—lifts slowly, pausing. Are we in 1560, or in 1570, or in 1590? It is an hour of Spain that we are now living. We live for an hour in the life of Spain, with our imagination, here at sunset, before the immensity of the sea.

I

AN ANTIENT (UN ANCIANO)

And the first thing we see is an aged man in a room. The room is within an immense edifice of gray stone. We see hundreds of little windows in the long smooth façades. On clear days, the sky glows in its limpid blue. The vaulted roofs are almost black. Swallows and house martins wheel, softly, incessantly, round the high towers. The hundreds of little windows give light to a multitude of apartments, chambers, saloons and corridors. Steps resound sonorously beneath the stone vaults. Everything in the landscape converges towards the immense building. The hills are austere. The woods which clothe them stand forth in dark colour. The rocks, jutting out from the severe verdure, are sharply peaked or formidably rounded.

Everything in the landscape—colour and line—serves to heighten the solidity and force of the enormous construction. And beyond the horizon, on the four cardinal points, indissolubly linked to the great edifice, to the small confined room within the great edifice, extends a vast and powerful empire. Along all the roads of the world, over seas, over plains, over mountains, treads a multitude of people. People who are going towards the immense edifice, or who are returning from visiting it. And above the building which symbolises that tremendous despotism, the swallows, in this calm and limpid twilight hour, are whirling round the towers and shooting forth their tiny piercing cries.

The *anciano* is in his room. The small door is closed. Throngs of visitors and servants pervade the rooms and corridors. From courtyard to courtyard, from corridor to corridor, from hall to hall, the multitude moves seeking information. And in proportion as the crowd is less, the footsteps are slower and the voices quieter. The long series of vast rooms keeps

back the visitors. And in the hall which precedes the apartment of the *anciano,* the *caballeros* and servants are few. The small door is closed. The *anciano* is seated before a table covered with a crimson cloth. Books and papers are heaped up on the table. A small silver bell glistens against the red cloth. The *anciano,* for a moment, has stopped reading the papers he had in his hands. He leans his elbow on the arm of the chair and rests his head on his hand. His face is pale. White is his beard. And in his eyes—clear blue eyes—we see a profound melancholy. The *anciano* rests and meditates. Sadness annihilates him. All kinds of misfortune, of heartache, of adversity, seem to have joined together to crush him. In the room, facing the table, on an altar-piece, stands a small statue of the Virgin. Throughout fifty years, that image has accompanied the *anciano* everywhere. Hour after hour, year after year, this Virgin has witnessed all his movements, has heard his every word. The old man lifts his face and places it lovingly and fervently against

the image. Around the *anciano,* death has carried away by degrees all the beings most beloved by him. Kindred, friends, faithful servants, have one by one disappeared. " He saw the deaths of almost all those whom he loved well, parents, children, wives, favourites, ministers and servants of great importance "— says Baltasar Porreño, speaking of the *anciano*—; " great losses in the matter of his estates, bearing all these blows and trials with an equality of soul which astonished the world." A moment ago, they had come to announce to the *anciano* the death of a most loyal servant. The *anciano,* his face laid against the image, has risen from his seat. On his breast, hanging by a fine silken cord, a little golden lamb glistens against the velvet of the black tunic. The *anciano* rises and goes to kneel down before the image. With a fine handkerchief he dries the tears from his eyes. Suddenly the small door opens and on the threshold appears a *caballero.* The *anciano,* surprised, thwarted, quickly rises. The *caballero* in the doorway stands immovable, rigid, and

turns intensely pale. Immovable, pale, stands the *anciano* too. His gaze remains fixed on the *caballero* of the doorway. The *caballero* does not dare to move. And slowly, the *anciano*—his hands trembling a little—slowly the *anciano* utters the words: "Benavides, go and amuse yourself in your house at Avila". The *caballero* makes a profound obeisance and disappears. The door of the room is closed again.

II

THOSE ABOUT THE PALACE (PALACIEGOS)

The life of the poor courtiers is a hard one. The courts, corridors and various rooms of the Palace are filled with courtiers and attendants. They go hither and thither, quick and solicitous. In the anterooms they whisper or remain silent during the long waiting times. They tire, and when they are standing and have nowhere to sit down, they lean first upon one leg and then prop themselves on the other. For distraction they look out of the windows without seeing anything, or they gaze upon a picture which they have seen a thousand times. Each one has his own special duties and is proud of his rights. Some stand in the doorways, leading to the rooms or to the street. Others have charge

of the bread, wine, water-ewers, lights ; others again have to arrange the royal journeys. Those farther within bear the weight of the thousand details of multitudes of ceremonies. The life of the poor courtiers is one long martyrdom. They are always dependent on the mood of the Señor. They laugh loudly if the Señor smiles, and they feign sobs if the Señor is somewhat sad. The attention of the poor fellows dare not flag for a moment. All things have to be done according to the rule of a complicated ceremonial. One single article must pass from these hands to those, slowly, gravely ; and from those, with a like deliberation, to others farther off. And at last the King, a little tired too, with august fretfulness receives it into his hands, perhaps even when it is not wanted.

There are attendant gentlemen at all the doors. Some have the privilege of retaining their hats, others have not the right to stand covered. Some are entitled to walk before the King, others must walk behind. The smallest increase of favour is received with enthusiasm.

If the King, either through inadvertence or courtesy, tells a courtier to be covered, he hastens to give thanks to the Monarch for the great grace accorded him. This occurs in *Hernani*. Also in *Garcia del Castañar*. The poor *palaciegos* have no rest. The King can do nothing without his *cortesanos*. In Lope's comedy *Si no vieran las mujeres!*—Act I, Scene IX—an emperor goes hunting followed by a multitude of courtiers, household officers, stewards, cooks. And a character in the work says:

Just look at the crowds, Sir,
Who follow a King,
*To amuse themselves but for a day!**

Christóbal de Castillejo, in his *Diálogo y Discurso de la Vida de Corte,* recounts the hardships of those about the King. The journeys of the Court are troublesome to the utmost degree. At times the Court has to halt in villages and

* *La gente, señor, me admira*
Que sigue a un Rey, aunque sea
Para entretenerse un dia.

small towns. There is not lodging for everyone. Sometimes they drive along the roads, stacked "fifteen in a hired cart". Arrived at the village, they are accommodated in "straw lofts and corners". And always whether in town or on a journey they have to be ready, diligent, attentive. And they must

. . . Go without ceasing
Twixt hall and chapel,
At the cry of the porter
*At the sound of the bell.**

* *. . . Andar al retortero,*
De la sala a la capilla,
Tras las voces del portero
Y al son de la campanilla.

III

PIETY (PIEDAD)

The *anciano* has left his room and gone out into the garden. He carries a rosary caught in his left hand, with the right he touches from time to time some papers held in his belt. In the garden, he pauses. He stands, and contemplates the landscape. The courtiers, stationary, remain at a little distance. The *anciano* prays and meditates. Twilight is creeping on. Life is short and fragile. Everything here denotes solidity, durability: the immense edifice, the mountains, strong and gloomy, the robust and leafy trees. To whosoever meditates, everything in the world brings the thought of the fleetingness of life. A breeze, a breath from the sick, a pitcher of water, may suffice to bring us

death. Death works incessantly throughout the universe. The *anciano,* in the garden, before the landscape, the rosary in his hand, prays and meditates. His eyes gaze vaguely into the distance. Everything in this panorama speaks of force and of power. And everything is moving, steadily, without pause, towards annihilation. What will be left of the immense and formidable Spanish empire, when centuries have passed away? And all the nations in the world, what will be their fate in the course of thousands and thousands of years, thousands and thousands of centuries? Evening is descending in its beauty. With the passing of time, time immeasurable, all the nations in the world will be overthrown and swept away, as light and rapid as those swallows, wheeling giddily in the twilight round the high towers. Some years hence, a monk will write a treatise on the temporal and the eternal. The world perisheth and the pains of the condemned soul are undying. Ever since the first man was condemned, in the beginnings of the world, through change after change and

century after century, there has been no change for him. Empire followed empire, and for him it was all a brief moment. The Assyrians passed through the world, and there was no change for the lost soul. "Eventually the whole power and monarchy passed to the Medes, all Asia was stirred, and although they lasted for three hundred years, they ended at last and it passed to the Persians. Later it passed to the Greeks, when the world was overturned once more. Later it passed to the Romans, which was a change greater still; the monarchy of the Romans has fallen too, and throughout all these world revolutions and changes, nothing has changed or passed away for that miserable soul." Everything is moving towards annihilation. If we could for an instant look beyond time and behold the work of universal dissolution, we should see, in a hideous vortex, among flames and clouds of dust, ruins of buildings, fragments of statues, thrones in splinters, sceptres, skeletons, brocades, jewels, cradles, coffins . . . and all in upheaved confusion and chaotic march

towards eternity. The *anciano* meditates and prays. He stands immovable facing the landscape. Suddenly he makes a light gesture. Respectfully a courtier draws near. The *anciano,* with gentle voice, ordains: "Tell Benavides, he need not depart from my side".

IV

HE WHO KNEW THE SECRETS
(EL QUE SABÍA LOS SECRETOS)

Every evening, at the hour of twilight, this *caballero* comes out of his house. He is very old. The house is surrounded by trees. The roof is invisible throughout spring and summer, hidden by the green leafage. From the road, in front of the house, you can see in the distance the city, emerging from its own black walls. And above its great houses, cupolas and belfries, rises the cathedral tower. Avila, on her hill of dark stone, is resting in the serenity of evening. The fields, bare in these autumn days, extend, in soft gray undulations, to the blue distance of the mountains.

The *caballero* has come out of his house, and begins to go slowly along the road. At the

height of his breast, caught up carefully, he carries a rosary. The point of his thumb (that of the left hand) is placed upon one of the beads. This gentleman who walks so slowly—he is very old—has left the Court and its vanities. He lived in the Palace ; he is the son of an old servant of the King ; throughout the whole life of the King he has attended him. From the time when this King was a child, he served in the bedchamber, gave him his dress, anticipated his wants, stood ever by his side. And this *anciano* has seen what no one else has seen, he has burned papers which no one has read, he has heard words which none other has heard. Great secrets weigh upon the Monarch. Like formidable ramparts, these secrets surround the figure of the King. Historians, critics, poets, as the centuries pass, will attack these invisible ramparts, each in his own way, passionately, ceaselessly, with their pickaxes. Sometimes a fragment falls from the wall, a ray of light seems to filter through the breach. Nevertheless the great circle of the rampart remains, and

anew, as time passes, the blows of the mattock resound against the stones. In the palace antechambers—contemporaneously with the events—the multitude of courtiers stirs and buzzes around the weighty secrets. The palace attendants whisper ; they watch the doors that they may say a few words to each other in lowered voice ; one leads another down to the far end of a corridor, or into the hollow of a window, to confer with him about the fearful mystery. Later on, round the home hearth, far from the Palace, the chatter spreads freely. The secret is attacked from all sides. Like the historians and critics in time to come, these contemporary people struggle with the enigma ; carefully they try to wrest from it the coveted facts ; one man succeeds in possessing himself of a tiny piece of the truth ; another boasts of possessing the whole, and has nothing to show but a few torn strips of writing ; yet a third proclaims—and all from time to time say this—that the terrible secret has no existence, that nothing has happened except what is natural, logical and

reasonable. And meanwhile the mystery, great and awful, leaves the Palace, and begins its march towards the future, treading, impenetrable, in search of the centuries to come.

But there is in the Palace one, who, a humble mortal pilgrim, has seen and heard all. The secret has had no existence for him, for him the facts have shone clear. This gentleman who is slowly taking his country walk, has attended the King ever since the King was a boy. In those moments wherein great personages revenge themselves upon the solemnities and strains of the day by throwing them off, this old gentleman has heard the King talk. Through the whole day a great man—monarch or artist—has been at his post, solemnly playing his part ; solemnity, emphasis, have possessed him from head to foot. Such an attitude of mind enervates and exhausts ; nor can even long habit contracted in childhood bring escape from this exhaustion. And when at last, in moments of intimacy, in a shut-off room, the rigidity relaxes, then the great personage has postures, movements and words

which are unknown to the court. But the old man who is walking towards the city, has, all his life, in the regal chamber, been beside the most powerful of monarchs in those moments of abandon. Silent, motionless, always attentive, his eyes have seen and his ears have heard all. His loyalty and his fidelity have been unbreakable. The great secrets which tread the centuries have not been secrets for him ; he never desired prizes or sinecures. When he felt old and ailing, he begged his Lord to grant him retirement, to a small house at Avila. And from his Lord he has received and kept the gesture of lifting the rosary to the height of his breast and carrying it there, with the point of the thumb—that of the left hand—placed upon one of the beads.

V

DIVERSITY (HETEROGENEIDAD)

Spain is large. Sicily and Sardinia have been incorporated with the Kingdom of Aragón in the Crown of Castilla. Gonzalo de Cordoba has secured Naples. The marriage of Felipe el Hermoso (Philip the Fair) with Doña Juana has given us the Low Countries. Cisneros has conquered lands in Africa. Charles V has reduced the *Milanesado* to obedience. And a whole vast world has been discovered by the Spaniards. The diversity of the kingdoms, lands, regions and cities of Spain is immense. Even inside the peninsular area, our eyes encounter a picturesque variety. A historian—Cánovas del Castillo—after giving an account of the greatness of Spain at the inauguration of national unity, adds: "But in accepting this

unity, each district remained as it was, with unchanged customs, with its own character, its laws, its traditions, varying or opposed. Nor was even the footing of all the States equal ; there were some of more or less noble standing, more or less privileged ; some free, and some almost enslaved ; for the Union had been carried out with very diverse motives, some districts coming into it voluntarily, as the Vascongados claim to have done ; others through matrimony, like Castilla and León on the one hand, Aragón and Cataluña on the other ; some through force of arms, such as Valencia and Granada, still populated by Moors ; some half by way of justice, half by force, such as Navarra. And not only so, but even within one province, every town had its own code, every class its law. In this way Spain represented a chaos of rights and obligations, of customs, privileges and exemptions, easier to conceive than to analyse and reduce to order ".

The most heterogeneous landscapes combine to make up Spain. The history of Spain has

been one perpetual tumult of opposing passions. The diversity of moral atmosphere has been as great in the nation as its variety of soil. Classes, cities, drew themselves together and fought for their own. In the Middle Ages the *Hermandades* (fraternities) came into being. The *Hermandades* are confederacies and tribunals (*juntas*) established by the town councils and the cities, to defend their laws and privileges. The *juntas* figure in the War of Independence. The *juntas* are active even during the nineteenth century. In 1844 Balmes writes: "It cannot be denied that few countries can offer such a spectacle as Spain has presented ever since 1834. Let a clamour arise in any corner: a *junta* is constituted, a programme is drawn up; the rebellious town declares itself independent, and exhorts the nation to imitate its example. The news spreads, people get excited, another city rebels, soon another, then another, and after a few days the Government finds itself circumscribed within the small area that it can see. Obliged to capitulate, to abandon its post, other

men rise into power, a manifesto appears, the *juntas* send in their congratulations, the new government orders them to dissolve, they obey, and the performance is over ".

We see feudalism penetrating far into modern times. Against feudalism, the Catholic Kings form a popular party. They support the new party by the power of the *Santa Hermandad.** Cisneros helps the people to oppose feudalism. During his regency, from 1516 to 1517, he creates a citizen militia, to aid him. And we see citizen militias created by the popular parties even in the nineteenth century. What is always sought is a support for the supreme Power in the midst of national heterogeneity. The moral atmosphere—as we said—is as varied as the land. And the land is variety itself. Within the boundaries of Spain there is a sample of every kind of European landscape. We have the romantic landscape, all mist and shadow, and the

* *La Santa Hermandad*, a kind of court of justice which had the right of trying and punishing without appeal persons who had committed offences or misdemeanours in fields and roads.

classic landscape, flooded with light. Castilla, Vasconia, Levante, offer us panoramas both classic and romantic. The great plain in which a group of poplars cuts itself out against the blue, is as beautiful as the green and wooded growths of Vasconia. The Spanish flora is superabundant. Of the twenty thousand plant species which clothe Europe, the Iberian peninsular claims no fewer than ten thousand. And even within one and the same species, a varying character defines itself from region to region. Lavender—*la flor del Señor*—which in the arid and elegant levantine hills is of a pale violet colour, in the grand and austere Guadarrama takes on a purple deep and intense, and the whole plant, gracious in Levante, in Castilla shows itself severe.

VI

AVILA

Avila, among all Spanish cities, is the most sixteenth century. It is called Avila of the *Caballeros*. Its population is not large. The ramparts—with their eighty and eight towers—gird the houses and form a completely closed circumference. The most beautiful palaces in Avila are those of the sixteenth century. There are memorials of the fifteenth century too. Everything in the city calls up Philip II and the Catholic Kings. Philip II had a predilection for Avila ; he built in the city the *Peso de la Harina,* and the *Carnicería.** The Catholic Kings establish the Convent of Santo Tomás—similar to *San Juan de los Reyes* (Saint John of

* Establishment for regulating the legal weight of flour, and the Shambles.

the Kings) in Toledo—and declare Avila a royal summer residence. Avila is not unlike Philip II in mood and character ; the stone of her buildings is purple, ashen. Everything is severe and noble in the city. Within the closed circuit of Avila an atmosphere of energy and passion has long been condensing. The *caballeros* dominate the city. All take an intense interest in politics. The bulk of the people has become habituated to the way of life of the city. The common herd, in the plebeian sense, hardly exists. All, more or less, are *señores*. Avila suggests the idea of a gothic Athens. The passion for politics, exercised in street and market place, shows itself in risings, revolts, subversive assemblies, revolutionary meetings and leagues. One of the city traditions is the guardianship within her walls of the child kings. Avila has guarded and defended child kings with a maternal love. We might say that owing to her degradation (in effigy) of a King—Henry IV—and her guardianship of the child kings, Avila considers herself above the monarchs. The

monarchs make their exit from the kingly life by way of Avila, and they cannot enter into the kingly life without Avila. And this tinge of sovereignty and independence helps us to penetrate deeper into the spirit of the city. The citizens live in a state of constant preoccupation with public affairs. Their souls stand ready for action. Rapidly a thought becomes an act. Philip II, on a given occasion, is unwilling to yield when they beg him to desist from certain measures against the *abulenses,** " because "—he said—" where people are taught to carry saying into doing, we have not long to wait for their deed ". Avila is mistress of the granaries, threshing floors and markets of the whole of Castilla ; she has the privilege of the measurements of grain ; by the *marco de Avila* both merchants and peasants are controlled. It is said that Avila used also to have the right, with her soldiers, of the first entry into battle.

In picturing Avila, we should not like to omit mention of the old prints, where, in the whole

* *abulense,* native of Avila.

area of a square, are to be seen only one gentleman with a high hat, and a lady with crinoline and parasol. A *guia* (guide-book) of 1863 tells us of streets in Avila called *de Barruecos, Caballeros, Cozuelo, Cuchilleria, Maldegollada, Tallistas, Tres Tazas, Muerte y Vida, Tejares.** By 1863 there is a railway, but it is a new thing, the diligences are still running. "The coach starts for Madrid on the uneven days at eight in the morning"—says the *Guia*—"and arrives here on the even days at five in the afternoon." There are four or five inns in Avila; *de la Estrella, de la Fruta, de Vulpes, del Puente.* In the *Circulo de Recreo,* in the *Union Avilesa* and in the *Aurora artistico-abulense,* the inhabitants of the city can expand their souls. In Avila there exist many small-sized squares. The small squares are the magic charm of old Spanish towns. The stone of the buildings is ashen in Avila. Today the silence in the squares is pro-

* Meaning (roughly indicated) the Street of Pearls, that of the Gentlemen, of the Little Kick, Cutlery Street, Execution Street, the Streets of the Wood-Carvers, of the Three Cups, of Death and Life, of the Tile-makers.

found. The gray of the stone makes bluer the blue of the sky. The squares are called *de la Catedral, de la Feria, de Fuente el Sol, de Magana, de Ocaña, de Pedro Dávila, del Pocillo, del Rollo, de las Vacas, del Rey Niño, de Nalvillo, de Zurraquín*. . . . "I do not know how to describe"—says Quadrado—"the spell of melancholy enchantment that is cast over the traveller by the little squares of Avila, which await him on his entrance, with their solitude and their façades of dark stone, at almost every gateway."

The author of the *Guia* already quoted gives us an account—with names and habitations—of the agents maintained in Avila by the great houses of Spain. In 1863 H.M. the Empress of the French had an agent, also the Dukes of Abrantes, Alba, Medinaceli, Roca, Tamames; the Marquises of Cerralbo, Fuente el Sol, Obieco, San Miguel de Gros; the Counts of Compomanes, Parsent, Polentino, Superunda, Torrearias; the Countess de Montijo. In Avila we see "an infinity" of shields. We see them on the

façades, on the gateways, on the capitals of the pillars, on the sharp street-corners. The shields are those of the Heredias, the Acunas, the Bazanes, the Mujicas, the Velas, the Guevaras, the Bracamontes, the Castrillos, the Salazares, the Cepedas, the Ahumadas. Avila is the city of gentlemen. The whole city lives an intense civic life. The *milieu,* the temperament, is aristocratic. And one moment there is, in the life of Avila, when this temperament culminates in a type living and resplendent—Teresa de Jesus— ; a type wherein action is allied, not with terrestrial and limited aims, but with an eager longing, spiritual, universal ; a type wherein the aristocratic quality reaches its highest and most refined expression ; *elegance unadorned.*

VII

THE MESSENGER (EL VEREDERO)*

The messenger is travelling by the by-ways, footpaths and short cuts of Spain. He comes from the coasts of the North, he is going to Madrid or to the Escorial. He travels faster and less encumbered than the couriers who go by the royal routes. In the wallet slung over his shoulder he bears a bulk of papers. There must be lamentable news in the valise. The messenger travels swiftly ; his feet barely touch the earth. Away, yonder, far from Spain, by foreign coasts, the tossing sea spits out, on to the sand or on to the great rocks, remnants of rigging ; planks and topmasts ; remnants of ships which had appeared invincible. The messenger travels fast. The green earth and the gray sky of the North are left behind. On reaching an inn, at night, he makes ready to

* *Veredero,* an official messenger, sent with orders or despatches. Tr.

rest ; he knows something of the terrible news his wallet holds. His face is sad. Those around him ask the reason of the sadness. The fatal intelligence spreads through the village, it brings a *caballero* out of his big house where he lives retired. Soon in that house they are debating the tragedy of Spain ; the *caballero's* eyes turn sorrowfully to his armour and decorations. And at dawn the messenger departs with his wallet. He crosses mountains, he fords rivers, he passes over plains. All the time he goes fast without stopping. The shade of the trees is not for him ; the shepherds' huts cannot hold him back. For a few hours during the night he rests ; before the day breaks he is on foot. He is making for the Escorial and Madrid. On foreign shores, among green seaweeds above the sand, rocking to the sound of the hoarse sea, are planks, hemp coils and masts, remains of ships which shall be called, in irony by the enemy, *" invincible "*. Wherever the messenger passes he leaves a track of sadness. Soon all Spain will be full of the fatal news. In the Escorial, or in Madrid, an

aged man will go down on his knees before a little statue of the Virgin. His face will be stricken with sorrow. For a decisive hour will have struck for Spain. Will history open out another perspective for Spain? No one can tell the exact hour which divides two epochs in history. Nevertheless this news, carried by the messenger in his wallet, will set the *anciano* thinking, secluded in his chamber. All Spain will be set thinking. What destiny will the future reserve for Spain? Will the *Patria* recover its greatness, or is it fated to move towards ruin? A new world has been discovered; Spain is creating a second great *Patria*. In these very days of desolation, Spain is the most prolific of the European nations. The messenger travels swiftly over plains and mountains; his feet hardly touch the ground. If that which he bore in his knapsack were joy, perchance he could not go so fast. Misfortune journeys with greater speed; hardly has the catastrophe happened, and lo! the news is flying into the farthest corners of Spain.

VIII

A MONK (UN RELIGIOSO)

A monk is looking out from the window of his cell. It is the same moment of evening twilight as that in which the *anciano* of whom we spoke prays and meditates in the garden, before the immense edifice. This *religioso* is an aged man too. His habit is black and white. His eyes can hardly see. As he can see almost nothing, he writes on small pieces of paper of various colours, to distinguish them one from another. The cell is poor. All his life the monk has meditated on certain pictures which hang on the walls, and because he likes them so much, because he feels such devotion to the images they represent, he has had their frames painted green, that he may not lose the power of discerning them. The monk sees almost

nothing ; he possesses nothing in his cell ; his life has been spent in writing, preaching, giving good counsel to people. He may sometimes have been rather rigorous with the disturbers of his Order. He could have been great things and he has not desired to be anything. His supreme necessity, as with Cervantes, is to write. On the table lies a volume written by him ; its title is *Libro de la Oración y Consideración*. The *religioso* writes, like Cervantes, in a simple way, clear and natural. And when he writes, his whole soul is moved. Divine emotion! Perhaps these are the two great writers—this little old man and Cervantes—who have put most feeling into their works. The pen runs quickly, borne by their hands. They hardly take count themselves of what they are writing. Fervour, enthusiasm, delicacy, tenderness, fill the phrases. In the simplest words they say everything. The *religioso* is leaning on the embrasure of the window. No one has given us so profound a sensation of time and of eternity as he. The fields outside are darkening. The

small venerable man, half-blind, wearied with years and infirmities, cannot see the stars which begin to gleam through the twilight. He raises his head and his lips move a little. With his earthly eyes he sees no stars in the sky ; nevertheless his spirit is nearing its sure liberation. And before long his soul will be winging its way through the Empyrean, beyond the sparkling stars, towards eternity.

IX

STYLE (EL ESTILO)

Every writer has his style. Every writer defends his style. All defence of style is a personal confession. Wherein consists the problem of style? In vocabulary or in construction? Writers of a full vocabulary may have an irritating style ; writers of a clear and precise construction may have a tedious style. The field of letters is very broad. Richness of vocabulary in writers who differ in their construction may make them alike admirable in style. Thus we admire both Lope and Quevedo. But the author of the *Libro de la Oración*, with moderation in vocabulary, with a simple, everyday vocabulary, has succeeded in giving to his construction an exquisite sensitiveness. And what is style in the last resort but the reaction of the

writer to his subject ? Style is a matter of feeling. The author of the *Libro de la Oración* has left us, in his *Retórica,* his view on the aesthetic of style. His ideal is, to be natural. " Therefore I counsel you "—he says among other things—" that you avoid, as a sailor would avoid a submerged rock, all unusual words which show the smallest suspicion of artifice." In the sixteenth century the great standard of style was set—both in practice and theory—by the author of the *Libro de la Oración*. Lope de Vega, many sided and varied, set himself in the matter of style, the same problem that he had set himself in dramatic technique, but although in the theatre he made a definite decision in favour of popular usage, in style he remained a vacillator all his life. From the spontaneous and direct he will suddenly pass to the " cultured ". As if in a swing, the marvellous genius of Lope goes from one to the other extreme. The spectacle is interesting, we are present at that phantasmagoria throughout the whole length of the poet's variegated work.

With consummate elegance, with refined dexterity, moving from verse to verse, Lope arrives at the most subtle *conceptismo*. Suddenly he stops. His feeling for the spontaneous and the popular warns him ; and then, a little song, some witticism, some parody of the " cultured ", of the *conceptuoso,* breaks from his pen. The most valuable element in Lope is, without doubt, the popular. On that side of his work Lope is a model and a master. The most important thing in style is to be clear. Whoso thinks clearly writes clearly. Lope often indicates this in his comedies. In *La mayor virtud de un rey,* one of the players says :

Bad speaking with good understanding
*Implies contradiction in terms.**

In another comedy, the admirable *Por la Puente, Juana*—Act I, Scene VI—, it is said of a Latin scholar :

* *Hablar mal y entender bien*
Implican contradicción.

His sin is the strange, the obscure,
Special genius in the Spaniard
Who knows that the sun is revered
For clarity and light.†

In truth the main blemish upon the writers of Spain is la *peregrinidad* (" the strange, the obscure "). In *La Celestina*—Act I—Parmeno says to the good mother: " I don't attend to what you say, because in good things the actual is better than the potential, and in bad things the potential than the actual. Therefore better is healthy than might-be-healthy, and better is the possibility of suffering than real illness. And so, it is better to retain the potential in evil than in good ". And Celestina exclaims: " You're wicked! one can't understand you! " Celestina's exclamation would seem singular even as early as the end of the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century it would be considered extraordinary. In our own days it is quite

† *Peca en peregrinidad,*
Propio ingenio de español,
Sabiendo que se honra el sol
De ser todo claridad.

unintelligible, to such an extent have we lost the idea of and the taste for clarity in style.

The standard of a perfect style was given later than the sixteenth century, in the seventeenth. And, a most curious thing, it was given by the same writer who codified *El Conceptismo.* In 1648, Baltasar Gracián publishes, in its final form, his *Agudeza y Arte de Ingenio.* Gracián's two favourite books are *El Conde Lucanor* and *El Guzmán de Alfarache.* Gracián never tires of praising D. Juan Manuel's book, and quoting from it ; that book is a model of naturalness and simplicity. And as if his obvious adoration for a book which is an ensample of naturalness were not enough, Gracián says, " The style is as natural as bread, we never tire of it ". Then by what measure shall we test the naturalness of a style? Gracián himself tells us. Natural style " is that which is used by men who talk well in their ordinary business without further study ". The Gracián who pronounced this sure rule was not the Gracián author of *El Criticón,* but the Gracián author of *El Comulgatorio,* a book clear, natural and simple.

X

SPANISH REALISM
(EL REALISMO ESPAÑOL)

In a chapel we study in silence a statue by Pedro de Mena ; in a monastery we stand contemplating a canvas of Zurbarán. The *Libro de la Oración* has created a calm and strong Spanish realism. That which makes art " real " is,—essential and specific detail. In the *Libro de la Oración* the description of the drama of Calvary moves us to pity at every moment, by this characteristic detail. The realism of the *Libro de la Oración* is the great Spanish realism, serene, agitating and strong. Let us look through the work, in the edition made by Andrés de Portonaris, in Salamanca, in 1566. Jesus has been taken. " Behold him well ; see how he goes along this road ; abandoned

by his disciples, accompanied by his enemies, with hurried pace, with *quickened breath,* with changed colour, his face inflamed and flushed by the haste of the journey." Upon Calvary Jesus is about to be despoiled of his tunic. " And as the tunic had stuck to the wounds made by the whips, and as the blood was congealed and adhered to the vesture, in undressing him they tore it off all in one with such force that they *renewed* and *broke open the wounds of the whips.*" The great strong executioners lift the Cross on high. See then " how they lifted the Cross on high ; and how they went on to place it in a hole which had been made for the purpose, and how, at the moment of fixing it, they let it fall with a blow ; so that *the whole of that sacred body would be shaken in the air* and the wounds would be torn afresh and the pains still more increased ". The Virgin goes in quest of the Son. " Hear from afar the sound of arms and the tumult of the people, the clamour of their cries as they approach. Then see the *glittering steel of the lances and*

halberds appearing above their heads; trace in the road the marks and drops of blood, which in themselves suffice to show her the footsteps of the Son and to guide her without other guide." The mother embraces the Son. "The mother clasps the lacerated body, she presses it firmly to her breast (she has no strength left but for this); she lays her face among the thorns round the sacred head; her cheek is upon his cheek; *the face of the mother is dyed with the blood of the Son,* and the face of the Son is watered by the tears of the mother."

Modern art in the great masters—say a Flaubert or a Pereda—has not gone farther in realism.

XI

DEVOTION, INSPIRATION (DEVOCION, INSPIRACION)

The *religioso* of the little cell is one of the inspired. Who better than he has described that wind, mysterious and divine, of " inspiration "? Speaking of devotion in the *Libro de la Oración,* the monk defines it thus : " Devotion is a supernatural readiness and fleetness which the Holy Spirit himself creates directly in the soul of the devout man, by means of which he is made prompt and swift for everything pertaining to the service of God. So that he who without devotion was heavy and dull and idle in that service,—lo! devotion (by virtue of the Holy Spirit) gives him new force and valour ; and he is seen in those works not tardy but swift, not loth

but appreciative, not melancholy but gay, not reluctant but ready and of a good will ".

That readiness and light alacrity which are bestowed by devotion, become in art inspiration. Those light, those happy moments, are moments of inspiration. It seems as if nothing in the world were held secret from us. At first we write slowly. We travel gently, but we feel safe. Little by little we become more eager. Our handwriting which was clear and legible, becomes indistinct through speed. There seems no time to express what we feel. A mysterious vibration pulses from brain to pen. The pen flies along. We see and hear nothing. The little noises which usually put us out, are not even noticed. How did we come upon the rare word which we have just written? At another time we should never have thought of that word. But now, that word, and others which were unknown to us, rise and run of themselves to the point of the pen. Whence come all these unfamiliar terms? Who is dictating the exact phrase, limpid, rapid, direct?

We must not stop, we cannot. Were we to pause we should lose in a moment the light alacrity and readiness. The phrases and words which we had thought out, meaning to use them at this very juncture, will not do. We have passed with velocity through the actual passage in our work where we had meant to employ those words and phrases, and we have left them behind. We have not employed them. We did not need them. They are far away, left as a station is left by the giddy speed of an express train. The pen races over the paper. Blessed moment of inspiration! All is light and easy. A difficulty presents itself, it is necessary to look up a quotation or verify a date. But we must not stop for this ; let us leave a blank space on the page. Let us utilize the happy moment. The mysterious communication which we are holding now with the world—visible and invisible—if we let it go we shall not easily grasp it again.

The aged monk was one of the inspired. Devotion moved his pen. Fray Luis de León

is Renaissance. This little old man, sensitive, delicate, slave to his subtle nerves, is Middle Ages. The difference is radical. The prose of his books flows pure, light, undulating, tender, pathetic, alive like the rippling water of a spring.

XII

MOUNTAINS AND SHEPHERDS (MONTAÑAS Y PASTORES)

While the *religioso* is at the window, looking out upon the evening twilight, the bonfires begin to shine out, kindled by the shepherds on the mountains. From down in the plain, from the deep valleys and glens, we see, far up, those shepherd fires. Beautiful are the mountains of Spain! The flocks are divided into *riberiegos* and *trashumantes*.* The *riberiegos* are as a rule a small number of sheep ; they are not to be met going in the lanes from one place to another ; they invariably pasture in the same meadows and glades ; when night comes, when

* "*trashumantes*, applied to sheep which pasture in the north in summer, in the south in winter ; *trashuma* to drive such sheep, spring and autumn.

Riberiegos, applied to sheep which graze by river banks and are *estantes* not *trashumantes*, permanent, not migrating (or rather migrated)."

the stars begin to shine, they gather into the village sheepfolds, or into the " shelters " of the hillside. The flocks known as *trashumantes* are hundreds and hundreds. They cross and recross all Spain. On the plains they raise such clouds of dust that they might be an army. From those hundreds of thousands of sheep come the fine cloths of the *caballeros* and the serges for the *religiosos*. In 1828, D. Manuel del Río, of Carrascosa, province of Soria, a migrating sheep-owner and Brother of the esteemed *Concejo de la Mesta,** published a little book entitled *Vida Pastoril* (Shepherd Life). He begins by saying:—" A flock containing one thousand one hundred head of sheep ought to have a chief shepherd, a partner, an assistant, an extra (who is also called an additional person), and a lad ". But he adds:—" The *sorianos,* who are of much older standing in the pastoral life than the montañeses, govern a flock on the

* *Mesta:* the proprietors of black cattle and sheep considered as a body. The annual meeting of shepherds and owners of flocks is called *El honrado Concejo de la Mesta,* the honourable Board of the Mesta.

road with no more than four shepherds, whom they call chief shepherd, lad, assistant and boy ". It is of the mountains of Spain that the author is speaking, the mountains of Soria, Cuenca, Segovia, León. He is from the land of Soria. In the *sierra* of Soria, " on its greater height called the Marsh of Orbión, the two copious rivers, Ebro and Duero, have their birth, and the whole mountain-chain divides the waters, to north and south. During the four summer months, the most rugged and craggy parts of this *sierra* are taken possession of by fine migrating flocks, and were it not so they would be uninhabitable, the lurking place of wild beasts. The *sierra* has some little towns, such as Pineda, Ventosa, Quintana, Covaleda and all those occupied by the *Cabaña Real* of the *Carreteros* ".*

Night is descending over the mountains and valleys. Quevedo, in his poem *El Sueño,* has given in two words a profound feeling of night.

* Cabaña Real; the whole of the travelling flocks possessed by the members who compose the body of *La Mesta* in Spain.

. . . Blind and cold
Fell softly from the stars
*The night. . . .**

The shadows of night are wrapping us round like delicate crêpe veils which we could touch. Night has fallen from the stars blind and cold. The shepherds' bonfires begin to gleam. In the folds the dogs bark, and their far-off yelps seem like lugubrious lamentations. In the hills there are wolves, vixens, badgers, weasels. The little lights of the cities have gradually gone out. The mountain bonfires must shine on throughout the drear night. Their splendours will last until dawn. For the beasts of prey watch the whole night through. They all have brilliant eyes and a clear skin. When they are caught one likes to stroke them on the neck and pass one's fingers through their oilless hair. City life has never contaminated or stained these little animals. Once their liberty is lost in the trap

* *. . . Ciega y fría*
Cayó blandamente de las estrellas
La noche. . . .

or in the snare, beneath our hands, with ears curved and bushy tail between their legs, they keep quite still and gaze upon us, with their limpid eyes, seeming to ask from us—half afraid, half hoping—a little pity.

The genius of Spain cannot be understood without taking into consideration this going and coming of the flocks over mountains and plains. Their paths, lines of track, sheep walks, cross and recross the whole country. The hills are clothed with high-land vegetation, or with brushwood and jungle. It is good to come across and to use the words which express the special features and idiosyncracies of field and mountain. There is the flavour of Spain in those words. Little used in the cities, they live on among villagers and rustics. The hills, as to vegetation, are divided into high and low. The low portion is also called *ratizo*. The high is formed by the *mohedas*. The *mohedas* are dense groves of oaks, cork trees, beeches, chestnuts. On the lower hillside (monte ratizo) the broom—with its yellow flowers—the juniper,

mastic, rosemary bushes stretch up the slopes forming little boscages; in between those shrubs, perfuming the air, grow lavender, thyme, aspic, wild marjoram. Where the woods are thick and close they may constitute what the people call *el monte hueco* (the hollow hill). Let us picture a *monte hueco* of pines. The trees grow up straight, unhindered, nothing obstructs the development of the stems. The ground is free of brushwood. From below the slope, by the hollow of the hill, we can see the green canopy—green and sweet-smelling—the hundreds of small columns which are its stems. Extended over the soil lies the soft slippery carpet made of the needles or "beards" of the pine. The air around is balmy with the scent of resin.

In the *sierras* of Spain there are serene and mysterious lakes, deep ravines, little meadows and summer pastures of gentle grass. From the pine-clad hill-tops we can discern the small towns which are outlined clear and precise in the distance. The air is light. The noises, owing

to the rarity of the air, are fainter than down in the plain. We welcome, with the silence in the harsh bare mountains, the gift of a tree arising in a fissure. Everything on these heights of Spain indicates an impetuous energy ; the crags, rough and projecting ; the peaks, sharp and smooth ; the enormous round stones ready to roll down the declivities.

The light is vivid. Scents reach us of rosemary, lavender, thyme, marjoram. The waters glide crystalline. The shrubs wound and tear with their rigid foliage. Like Spanish literature, like Spanish thought, the whole land is strength, impetus and brilliance. Beautiful are the mountains of Soria, of Cuenca, of León, of Segovia. Along their slopes and fells go journeying hundreds of flocks. From them will come the rough cloths and the fine cloths to be worn by the monk, the peasant, the soldier and the lord.

In the busy looms of the cities the treadles hum their cadenced noise. Let twilight come and they will be still. In the mountains the shepherds are kindling their fires.

XIII

CLOSED PALACES
(PALACIOS CERRADOS)

Night descends, blind and cold, alike upon shepherds' huts and princely palaces. What can a palace be like? How does a king's room look? Santa Teresa does not know what they are like. She does not feel sure that kings' rooms are called *camarines*. "You go in"—writes Santa Teresa in No. VI of *Las Moradas*—"You go into an apartment of a king or great lord (I believe they call them *camarin*), where they keep innumerable kinds of glasses and pots and many other things arranged in such a way that you can see them almost all, as you enter." And the saint adds this memory of her own: "Once they took me into a room of that kind in the house of the Duquesa de Alba (where,

as I was passing through on a journey, obedience obliged me to spend two days, owing to the importunity of that lady), and I stopped amazed on the threshold, and wondered what could be the use of all that confusion of things, and then I saw that the Lord could be praised for the sight of so many varieties of things, and now I am glad, for it has been of use to me since ".

The beautiful palaces were built by artists of the Renaissance. Yet the Renaissance made little way in Spain. The Middle Ages go on dominating through the fifteenth, sixteenth, and part of the seventeenth century. The Middle Ages are simplicity, feeling, piety, devotion. The Middle Ages are the concrete in opposition to the abstract. The Renaissance did not harmonize with the landscape of Spain, nor with the temperament—grave and austere—of the Spaniards, nor with their tradition of continued and ardent struggle. *Quijote*, and the *Libro de la Oración* are Middle Ages, as is the spontaneous and popular part of the work of Lope. In *La Celestina*, a mixture of Middle Ages and

Renaissance, the best part is the part owed to the Middle Ages, the love-song in the garden and the tragic lament of the father, which speaks the fragility of all things and ends by dominating the whole work. The Renaissance, yes, has built many palaces in Spain. The balconies are of wrought iron. Fine traceries are worked in the white stone. But the window shutters of many of these great houses are closed ; closed are the gates of the orchards behind them ; the weeds grow rank in the walks. The lords of these palaces have gone away beyond the seas. Inside the houses, in the vast rooms, the dust has gradually spread a thin cloak over the furniture. The " confusion of things " which astonished Santa Teresa is at rest in cupboards, sideboards and cabinets. The centuries will pass. Who will open up these palaces afresh? Where, after three hundred, four hundred years, will many of the things be found which constitute the amazing confusion? Who will sit in this high embossed-leather chair? And this portrait of a *caballero* with his red sword of Santiago or with

the *tao* of San Juan* on his breast, where will it hang? Ten, twelve, fifteen great mansions in the noble city are closed ; in distant lands, beyond the seas, beneath the light of other stars, are their lords. And in those far immensities, in hours of melancholy, surely there will wake a memory filled with tenderness for these palaces and for these gardens wherein the roses, uncut by anyone, drop their leaves lingeringly on to the pathways in spring and in autumn.

* Tao : Badge worn by officers of the orders of St. Anthony and St. John.

XIV

A TRAVELLER (UN VIANDANTE)

At this hour of twilight, in a lonely part of the country, a traveller is seated in front of a wayside inn. The road passes the door. The traveller's face is aquiline, his hair chestnut, his forehead smooth and free of care. His eyes are bright and his nose, though well-proportioned, is curved like the beak of a hawk. Great moustaches overshadow the mouth. If he were to rise, we should see that he has a slight stoop. Many labours weigh him down. All summer he has been on foot, journeying through the country and visiting the farms. He is obliged to do business with rough people, he finds himself moving in a spiritual *milieu* which is not his own. There is a deep-seated disparity between his sensitiveness and the mental

atmosphere surrounding him. This traveller has published some books. He bore himself heroically in one of the greatest battles of history ; it left him with a maimed hand. And now, among churlish people, from inn to inn and from village to village, he feels an inward sadness. When we feel above our environment, and when necessity holds us chained to that environment, little by little our spirit concentrates itself upon an interior ideal. We adapt ourselves, yes, to the material world ; we accept life as it comes. We remember that kindness is everything, and that kindness can be shown, overflowing from our hearts, at all times and in all places. But this conformity finds its requital in the inner dream. Yes ; the world is bitter for us. At our age we are already taking leave of hope ; the world will not change towards us now ; if we had hoped for a little good fortune, alas, the lucky card, the windfall, the unexpected chance, does not come. So we turn away from the material world, and we create for ourselves, for ourselves alone, a different

world, of phantasy. And in that ideal which we treasure in solitude, our whole life reconcentrates itself. Without that imaginary raft of salvation, our spirit would sink and be overwhelmed in the abyss. And we may be obliged to go trafficking through villages and inns like this traveller ; we may be forced to do business with rough people ; we may suffer adversity ; but all the time, hidden within us, is quietly arising for us alone our secret world, a world which we make purer and more beautiful, day by day, in our meditations. The thoughts found in books are of great value. But ideas from books read here and there would be useless did we not bear within us the spiritual detachment of which we spoke. Reading is but an aid to the slow growth of the fabric. Reading is but the whetstone of the dream.

From the interior of the inn come cries, and the sound of blows. The traveller arises and goes into the house. A knight is wrangling with the master of the hostelry. Tall, thin, bony, the figure of the knight seems to have

stepped out of past centuries. No one can understand the archaic lingo which he talks. The dispute arose through his desire to protect an indigent man whom the innkeeper wanted to cast out of the house. When the traveller comes in, all are silenced ; in his look there is a sweet air of command. The innkeeper forbears ; the knight of the sad countenance stands erect, his arms extended over the beggar in a pose of protection ; the beggar looks, now at the knight, now at the traveller who has just entered. And when the lord of ancient assistance has expounded the case with strange reasonings, the traveller smiles a little—a smile of ineffable tenderness—draws near to him and clasps him to his breast. His inward dream—o marvellous irony!—has become concrete, outside, in the world, in the person of a fool.

XV

THE THEATRE (EL TEATRO)

The playhouse is deserted. At this moment of twilight the performance has just finished. Years later, in 1629, a writer—Juan de Zabaleta—will describe this ending up of the play: the public gone, the playhouse dark and forsaken, two women lingering behind; during the piece they have lost a key and now with the help of a candle they are looking for it among the benches. The courtyard is solitary, night is descending blind and cold from the stars. The spectators have departed and the comedians have vanished. No, not quite all the actors have gone back to their inns. Silently, through the darkness and solitude, a man, a woman and a child are approaching; after the play they waited a moment in the dressing-room and now

they are slowly setting out for their lodging. The man is somewhat corpulent, and he looks pale. In his hand he holds the small hand of the child. The woman is still young. They have come out of the theatre and have directed their steps towards an inn in the town. And once inside their little room, the man lets himself fall heavily into a chair. The woman draws near and kisses him on the forehead. The man has taken the child on his knee. This man is tired and breathes with difficulty. Tenderly he turns the child's head towards himself and places the little cheek against his own wan face. The mother looks upon them, touched, in silence. Through the whole of Spain these three travel in company with other actors ; they go from Granada to Madrid, from Madrid to Toledo, from Toledo to Segovia, from Segovia to Valladolid, from Valladolid to Burgos. The great national theatre is taking birth. A whole world, issuing from the brain of the poets, will be given shape and form through the efforts of these men. When will this man, tired and pale,

be able to enjoy a moment of tranquillity? Not for him is the sweet native air of the home corner, which other artists may breathe in peace. His lot is the road. His perpetual and inexorable obligation is the adjustment of a mask of jollity over inward sorrows. In the inn chamber after the play, weary, overwrought by life, the actor holds his child on his knee. The child is his delight ; without the child, he would be unable to bear the fatigue of the work and the wandering life. And with deep, unspeakable emotion, beside the silent mother as the darkness falls, he presses the child's bright cheek against his own pallid face.

The great national theatre is taking birth. What is the Spanish classical theatre? The classical theatre is a synthesis of the whole of Spanish life. From the time when in the *Poema del Cid* a great moral diapason of life and art stands fixed, all Spanish art, later, will adapt itself to that diapason. And that diapason is a special tone of elevation, of dignity ; it forcibly excludes certain aspects of daily life. In Spanish

life all is consonant and coherent: the theatre, the mystical temper, the landscape—the landscape of Castilla—the cast of mind of the citizen. When you hear people speak of the " emphasis " of the Spaniard, you may assent, but that emphasis you must call dignity. The Spaniard is noble and grave. His dignity rejects the intrusion of an everyday prosaic detail. Noble, grave and severe is his realism in the *Libro de la Oración*. And as little can the drama admit the small specific items of daily life. It is serene and noble like the landscape. The playwright neither needs nor desires to point out the entries and exits, and as little does he find it necessary to descend to intimate particulars. If in the classical theatre he were to descend to those *minutiæ,* the whole work would automatically fall from the exalted plane whereon the poet has placed it. The resemblance between landscape, citizen life and artistic vision, would be marred. Do not let us cavil at the mistakes and anachronisms of the great dramatists. In the fervid atmosphere which pervades the

theatre, such inaccuracies disappear. The essential here, as in the *Poema del Cid,* fount of the whole great drama, is the tone of life, above daily realistic detail ; the tone of dignity, of grandeur, of elevation which the poet lends to his characters.

Night is closing in. The little room in the inn is almost dark. The actor is holding the child on his knee.

XVI

A NUN (UNA RELIGIOSA)

With the fall of evening the little cart has reached the city. A nun and her companion have alighted from it. In the morning they started from another town. They have been journeying all day. The wind blows cold over the plain. The *religiosa* is not very well. Halfway through the afternoon, she and the nun who accompanied her brought a crust of bread out of a bag, together with a little bit of cheese, and they dined. The *religiosa* is rather ill, the cold wind of autumn hurts her throat. This good lady travels without ceasing through Spain ; she goes from village to village and from town to town, she talks with friars, nuns, and prelates. For all she has gracious words. Her eyes are black and round. " Eyes gay and

gracious," says Padre Ribera, " which when she laughed made everybody laugh, and on the other hand very grave when she wished to show gravity in her face." The nun has a strong constitution. " I am not in the least delicate," she says, speaking of herself, " rather I have a heart so strong and rough that at times it is a trial to me." Strong and rough, not against mankind, but against adversity. Yet today is the day whereon this valiant *religiosa* is about to feel herself a trifle unstrung. Toil, hardship, the hostility of men, have never yet made her lose her serenity, and today for a simple little nothing she will be on the point of losing it. The cart has arrived in the city. The nun and her companion have no acquaintance here. In the town whence they come they were given vague indications about that which they wanted to know. The little cart goes turning in and out of the narrow streets, sometimes it stops and the driver makes inquiries. Then it goes on again. The Sister who accompanies the *religiosa* is deaf, and the nun herself has a trouble in her

throat which makes her voice inaudible. They cannot understand one another when they talk. The cart stops in front of a house. Will this be the house where they are going to found a small convent? The door is standing open ; by a couple of steps you mount into the entrance hall ; it is washed with lime. The walls are a pure white. A little door opens on the right ; it leads into a small room in which there is a large earthen jar and two pitchers. On the left, by mounting two more steps, you reach a short corridor. At the end of the narrow passage you come upon a courtyard surrounded by a high gallery. The roof of the entrance hall is formed by square beams sustaining wide boards. The courtyard gallery is of wood. The wood of the roof and the wood of the gallery, in contrast with the bright whitewash, look dark and smoky. Many generations, since the Middle Ages, have passed through this poor dwelling. Cathedrals and palaces are great and sumptuous ; the names of those who have built cathedrals and lived in palaces may have passed into history. Yet in

these humble houses, from centuries back, have lived generations of people who worked and suffered in silence. And these white walls and these smoky timbers, dull, commonplace, without artistic beauty, perhaps call forth a deeper and more inexpressible emotion than do the marvellous monuments. The nun and her companion have entered the house. In it there lives an aged man, almost blind, terribly deaf. This is the *caballero* with whom the *religiosa* must come to an understanding with a view to her foundation. To arrive at an understanding is however not possible. The nun cannot speak aloud ; the *caballero* cannot hear what the nun says. She makes vain efforts to express her mind. The *caballero* bends his head acquiescing, but he understands nothing. Pen and paper in the house there is none. For a time the *religiosa* tries hard by means of gesture. She grows a little impatient. The old man looks at her in silence. The nun rises, and walks to and fro in the room, from one side to the other. The time is passing uselessly. Again she strains

herself to be understood. Suddenly, enervated, exhausted, her eyes become illumined. Her whole person trembles. Is there someone invisible near her ? Speaking of one of these mysterious approaches of succour the nun writes : " I could feel that it was on my right, but not with those senses wherewith we can feel that a person is close to us, because it is by another, more delicate way, that one does not know how to say ". On the threshold, smiling, with his arms crossed upon his breast, stands a *religioso,* a friend of the nun.

XVII

FIDEISM (EL FIDEISMO)

The old inquisitor is in his own rooms, rather uneasy. He is a great lord. Life for him has had many ups and downs. The old inquisitor's uneasiness is occasioned by a half sheet of paper lying on the top of his desk. On the white page are seen written these lines: "If we desire to be christians, it is needful for our passage through the greater part of life, that we lose this compass of Reason and navigate by Faith, regulating our works by her, especially in those things which concern Religion and the christian sacraments". The old inquisitor walks up and down the room. At times he stops before the desk and takes up the piece of paper. He has read what is written on it many times; he knows it by heart; nevertheless when he tries

to think of something else his glance turns unconsciously to the manuscript lines. That which these lines say has been copied out of a book. It can be demonstrated that those words are the *résumé* of a book and of a personality. We must lose the compass of reason. Reason cannot guide us. Only faith is light. And the old inquisitor lays the paper gently down on the desk and goes back to his pacings. A few days ago an Assembly of the *Suprema* met to examine the book out of which these lines were copied. But it could not reach an agreement. Within two or three days it will meet again in council ; in that meeting the old councillor is expected to give an opinion. The Tribunals of the Inquisition are distributed over all Spain. There is the Inquisition of Toledo, that of Valladolid, that of Llerena, those of Santiago, of Sevilla, of Granada, of Córoba, of the Canaries, of Logrono, of Murcia, of Zaragoza, of Valencia, of Barcelona, of Mallorca (Majorca). In the Indies there are those of Mejico (Mexico), of Lima, of Cartegena. The highest Tribunal is

the *Consejo Supremo*. It is presided over by a general inquisitor, and is composed of five councillors. From the creation of the *Suprema*, in 1483, until 1596, there have been fifteen presidents of the *Consejo*.

His beard touching his breast, his head bent, the *caballero* stands still, once more, in the middle of the room. On the desk, on the white page, the first words, written in a clear hand, say : " If we desire to be christians, it is needful for our passage through the greater part of life, that we lose this compass of reason . . . ". The sixteenth century is the century in which the eternal conflict between reason and faith is presented in its most dramatic conditions. In Spain, as in other countries, the Middle Ages struggle with the spirit of the Renaissance ; but if in other parts the Renaissance triumphs, the Middle Ages have a vigorous persistence in Spain. And *fideismo* is Middle Ages. The old inquisitor has lived much and has read many books. Let us not think that we, the men of today, are alone in our privilege of learning.

The statement copied out on the white paper is dangerous, heretical. Is it as much so as it seems? The conflict is terrible, is anguish. His heart tells the old *caballero* that it is faith which is solid, living and fruitful. Reason can prove nothing. Step by step, rational discourse reaches a point where demonstration is impossible. One can neither deny nor affirm anything. The assailant and the defender must join hands. Reason is a chimera. What is this reason, so weak, fluctuating, uncertain? A little touch of fever shows us that reason is not the same thing in the sick as in the healthy man. When we fast, our reason is not the same as when we are satisfied with food. A mountain, a stream, separate two countries ; the truth, synthesis of reason, is not the same on this side as on that. The old inquisitor reflects as to what words he must use in condemning the dread proposition. Shall he condemn it? It is necessary, yes, to condemn it. And in condemning it a good man is condemned, a noble man, a man full of enthusiasm. There is no drama more sorrowful

than this conflict between faith and reason. In Spain the triumph was for faith. The good man who rejects the compass of reason and gives himself up wholly to faith is a great predecessor of Pascal. His doctrine is identical with that of Pascal, and his life was as tragic as was that of Pascal. With a profound serenity he bore his persecutions and hardships. From the greatest height, Primate of Spain (*Primado de las Españas*), he fell to a prison. His gentleness never changed. By his example he vivified his doctrine. "He was a foe to backbiters and evil-speakers"—says an author—; "he reproved them severely; he pardoned with much readiness all those who offended him, and never tried to take vengeance on them; in eating and drinking he was temperate, without luxury of any kind, so that he even distributed among monastery, prisons and hospitals the presents made to him by his vassals, and did not allow those gifts to be served at his own table." Fray Bartolomé de Carranza was succeeded in the Chair of Toledo by don Gaspar de Quiroga.

XVIII

THE OLD INQUISITOR
(EL VIEJO INQUISIDOR)

The old inquisitor is seated in his room. Before him is a table, and on the table is a pile of books. Among these books there is a Bible in Castillian ; another called " Letter to Philip II ", and another which bears the title " Image of Antichrist ". The old inquisitor has lived in this house a long time. He married young, he loved his wife passionately. By his wife he had a boy. The two adored the son. It cost them much trouble to rear him. The health of the boy was precarious. Every month, the boy's eyes would glow with a slight attack of fever. He would pass seven or eight days in bed. The mother and father, distressed, would bend over the child : they would watch him for hours.

The boy grew. Other children played and frolicked ; he would stay quiet in a corner, reading. Often of an afternoon, one of the servants would take him out for a country walk. He liked to stretch himself on the grass and lift up the big stones. The insects, disturbed by the light, would run to and fro on the moist earth. At other times he would watch the inconstant ripples, as they ran and turned above the waters of a pool. Nature was his chief joy. Nature entered into his spirit and took possession of it for life. The mother and father lived wholly for the child ; often, secluded in one of the rooms, they would talk of the boy's future. What will he be? Shall they see him one day, amid white clouds of incense, in a spacious cathedral, with brocaded vestments, 'neath the soft sigh of the organ, lifting with his fine white hands the Sacred Host? Will his low voice resound under the wide vaults, touching all hearts? The mother would be moved by this hope, a tear would fall from her eyes. The father would repress his feeling, in silence.

And by the time the boy took his way to Salamanca, the mother had died. The blow was terrible for the noble *caballero*. For many months he did not cross the threshold of his house. He lived absorbed, in dark silence. The world fretted him. Slowly an idea began to germinate in his brain, the idea of renouncing earthly things. He became ordained. A year after taking orders, he was appointed councillor of the Supreme Inquisition. His son stayed on at Salamanca ; but the son's studies were no longer theological. He was now studying medicine. On graduating as a doctor, he returned to his father's house. The youth had the same character as when he was a child, he was reserved and dreamy. In the sunny garden gallery behind the house, he would spend hours and hours with a book in his hand. From time to time, from the pages of the book, his gaze would rise and lose itself in the clouds. And at nightfall, in the quiet of the house, the lamp illuminating the boy's face, the father would watch him long at a time, ecstatic, uplifted.

The face of the boy was the face of the wife whom the *caballero* had loved so much ; they were the same eyes, large and blue, with the sweet melancholy look.

The boy went to Paris,—"el gran Paris", as Garcilaso called it— ; he went to Paris and he went to Flanders. He stayed two years in foreign lands. At the end of that time he returned to Spain. And now, since yesterday, he is back in the ancestral house. When he went away, his father had given him a likeness in miniature of his mother. The father wanted a large portrait to be made, in Flanders, after this miniature. And the son has brought the large portrait. It has been hung. The vivid and splendid colours—master work from a master brush—stand out in the severity of the room. At this hour of dusk, when all is bathed in shadow, the noble, beautiful lady looks out from the darkness in her picture. And the old inquisitor looks at the loved wife, then fixes his gaze on the books which are laying on the table. An hour ago, turning over his son's things in a trunk, the

father had come upon those books. Those books are written by Spanish Lutherans. When the old inquisitor saw the nature of the volumes, his face whitened and his hands trembled. For a long time he remained stupefied ; looked and relooked at the books, left them on a table, came back again to examine them. At last he took them to his study. He is seated now, in an arm-chair in front of the mother's portrait, and while the room sinks into darkness the old inquisitor remains motionless, his head between his hands. The boy went out this afternoon for a walk in the fields, he may be back at any moment. Steps are heard in the corridor. The old councillor trembles. They are not his son's steps. Silence again. A little later, the sound of other steps. Yes, those are the steps of his son. They are coming nearer. The old *caballero* feels a pained oppression at the breast, and instinctively rises. A hand has just taken hold of the latch. The door is opening. . . .

XIX

CASTLES IN SPAIN
(CASTILLOS EN ESPAÑA)

In Spain there are many castles. They are almost all in ruins, they are to be seen here and there all over the country. In the sixteenth century many of these castles had already fallen into decay. In *Las Partidas** there is minute mention of the castles. The whole of *titulo* XVIII in the second *Partida* (*titulo* composed of thirty-two laws), is taken up with the castles. This solicitude shows the importance of the castles in Spain. The prose of the venerable Code is contemporary with the foundation of many of those castles which we see in ruins. Reading it, we feel as if we were penetrating into some fortress of the thirteenth century.

* Las Siete Partidas, the laws of Castille, compiled by King Alphonso the Tenth, in the thirteenth century.

There are castles which dominate the plains from the heights ; others are " set ", as in jewellery, in the walls of the cities ; we come upon one fronting the sea, lording it over that blue immensity, blue, green, or blackening gray. . . . They are rough, strong, huge, the castles of Spain. They sound fantastic, but their existence is beyond doubt. In them princes and dynasties were imprisoned, kings were born and died ; in them were raised the banners of child-kings ; by means of them bloody rebellions were perpetuated. In that of Medina del Campo an unhappy queen lived and the greatest queen of Spain died ; from the round tower of another,—that of Alaejos—doña Juana, spouse of Enrique IV, was let down in a basket one night, in 1468 ; Montiel, in 1369, witnessed the terrible struggle between the King Don Pedro and his brother Don Enrique ; in Monzón Jaime I passed his infancy ; Escalona was restored by Don Alvara de Luna and was reputed the most perfect in Spain ; in splendid Olite were celebrated the nuptials of the Prince of Viano and doña Inez

of Cleves ; in Pedraza in 1526, Henry and Francis, sons of Francis I, were imprisoned and during four years kept as hostages ; in Arévalo was confined William of Nassau, Prince of Orange ; in Javier was born one of the most meritorious of Spanish saints ; Pamplona was the prison of Quintana ; in Bellver, in Palma de Mallorca, Jovellanos was confined ; and in that castle of which we spoke, fronting the sea, certain artillery men were imprisoned in 1873, who, united with those of all Spain, originated the fall of a throne.

All these castles speak to us of turbulence, factions, revolts, tumults. Loyalty and fidelity have been sheltered within their walls too. They heroically resisted the fury of sieges. In the heterogeneity and effervescence of Spain all these castles—in towns and in open country—are as it were the sensitive points of the national organism. It is expected in *Las Partidas* that the castles be sufficiently supplied with provisions. Water must least of all run short. " They must not forget salt, nor oil, nor vege-

tables." The most efficient protectors of the castles are the archers. The archers should know their duties well, and be able to make and mend their bows. "Whereas: the sentinels and the second sentinels, called *montarazes,* and the patrols outside at the foot of the castle, and the look-out guards placed on the towers by day, and the listening sentries by night; the warden should care for them all as far as he possibly can, to preserve their loyalty, treating them well, and not reducing that which they ought to receive. And he should change them often, that they may not stay too long in one place." Our imagination conjures up the life in those castles, it hearkens all the sounds and sees the lights and shadows. It hears the sonorous noise of the footsteps, intermixed with clinking of spurs, under the resounding vaults; the neigh of the horses; the clamour of the soldiers and servants; the sharp call of the trumpets and the barking of the packs of hounds. It watches the splendour of the torches throwing fantastic shadows on the walls, the dense smoke of the fires kindled

in the courtyards, the vivid colours of the trappings and uniforms—gold, red, green, silver—standing out against the blackened ramparts. Perchance we descry a wanderer mounting the slope towards the castle. He is coming nearer. He walks supported by a high staff ; a wide *sombrero* covers his head ; a mane of hair, tossed back, falls over his shoulders. When he gets near, we see that his eyes are blue and his hair golden. The wanderer comes from distant lands. Perhaps he came to Spain, in 1212, accompanying some lord—Teobaldo Blasón or Arnaldo de Narbona—to help in the battle of *Las Navas*. Since then he has journeyed wandering, from castle to castle. On arriving before the gateway of the fortress, face to face with the archers who appear on the walls, he lifts his head, takes off his hat with a noble gesture, and in sweet melancholy voice intones a prayer to the Virgin :

Vera vergena María,
Vera vida, vera fes,
Vera vertatz, vera vía. . . .

Of that castle to which we referred, fronting the sea, nothing remains but the outside walls. The building of its first fortifications was begun about 1194 in the times of Sancho *el Fuerte*. The mighty fabric rises on a ridge ; on the one hand lies the city—at the foot of the slope—and on the other we see the sea. Looking towards the castle from beyond the sea, are France and England—our historical rivals—the nearest coast of France can be discerned on the right with the naked eye. On the left, far off, we see three tiers of mountains : the first, green and reddish, with small white specks of houses ; the second, blue, dim, blurred ; the third made up of peaks, sharp, fine, delicate, almost invisible in the mistiness of the surrounding air. Those remote, ethereal mountains are the mountains of ancient and noble Cantabria. The strong battlemented wall of the castle remains intact. Appearing above the ramparts, we see the walls of a big house. The castle ramparts are black, the walls of the house are yellow. The interior of the house has been demolished ; from the

field, through the empty window spaces, we can see the sky. A complete study of plant life could be pursued on the declivities of the castle, in the moats and fortifications. Ferns, thistles, nettles, herbage, grass, mallow, bramble, fill both fortress and declivities with verdure. On the topmost edge of the high wall grows fennel ; against the background of deep blue it outlines its little sprays, fine and erect. There are growths in the joints of the blocks of stone, on the merlons, in the escutcheons which project above the gateway. The yellow-coloured flowerets of the mouse-ear (*oreja de ratón*) alternate with the small forest pinks—*dianthus caryophyllus,* of Linnæus—so graceful and bright. Those little woodland pinks enamel the slopes ; they peep out from among the ferns and brambles, the children gather them when they climb up to the castle in the afternoon. The pink is the flower of Spain. " This is the favourite flower of the Spaniards "—say D. Claudio and D. Esteban Boutelou in their *Tratado de las flores* 1804— ; " we cultivate

none other with so much care and diligence, and indeed it is true that it possesses every quality that can recommend a flower, uniting the characteristics of brilliancy, glow and variety of hue, with fragrance and sweetness of scent ; which things are the most valuable and the most to be desired in flowers." Those forest pinks, aflame and fragrant, growing on the frontiers, seem the vanguard of the flowers of Spain. The flowers of Spain luxuriate in colour and vitality, they are not the bland, delicate flowers of other nations. They are well represented by the forest pinks ; inland, all over Spain, the traveller will come upon small pinks, serrated, opening out red, white, pied, all of brilliant hue and penetrating perfume. On the castle slopes, in the moats, on the walls themselves, pinks mingle with the purple flowers of the mallow and with the white flowers of coriander and privet. Within the fortress, in the principal hall, now roofless, sprigs of lent gilliflowers cover the floor, and in April its velvet blossoms, mulberry coloured, form a close and lovely

carpet. The grim square stones of the walls are variegated with patches of black and yellow lichen. From a merlon, a wild fig tree crooks its branches over the moat. Ivy creeps up the wall to the height of the battlements, and rests there, displaying its broad green cloak. All these plants have a free, luxurious life. The air, above the sea, 116 meters high, is fresh and pure. A fine haze veils the horizon. If after a long stay in these parts we forsake the region of misty horizons and go up to the central table land, our eyes drink in, there, with avidity, the luminous distances and the high relief of clear and firm terrestrial lines.

This castle fronting the ocean has seen,—like the other castles of Spain—both tragedies and wars. Hundreds of years ago the sea began to reach up to the houses of the townspeople. Fire, all down the centuries, has raged furiously against the city. Between 1266 and 1813 ten or twelve great conflagrations have swept away the population. The old castle has watched the flames blazing at its feet, has heard the crash

of falling houses, the cries of the terrified people and the clang of the bells. In 1688, in this same castle, a thunderbolt exploded the powder magazine. It left the fortress in ruins. Now all is repose. The sea stretches out, immense. From below comes up the cry of the sea-gulls. The sea-gulls wheel slowly over the blue waters, or rest upon the waves—like small bits of white paper—and stay there motionless long at a time, borne and carried, lifted and sunk, softly, gently rocked.

XX

THE SOUL'S FATHERLAND (LA PATRIA MORAL)

If a Spaniard of the sixteenth century were to come to life again, he would have some difficulty in understanding our conception of Country, of Fatherland. *La Patria* is a creation of culture. *La Patria* was brought about in Spain—after the war of Independence—by railways, books and periodicals. The way had been prepared by the keen critical spirit which gathered round Feijóo in the eighteenth century. A Spaniard of the sixteenth century would not readily understand our conception of *Patria*. Everything is centralised today, and everything has links and connections which in past centuries it had not. In the Nation we are all wrapped round and involved in a subtle mental atmos-

phere. In the sixteenth century the true *Patria* was the religious environment. Religion was the real Fatherland. It may be that today, inside a Nation, we feel from end to end of it more shelterless and alien than in the sixteenth century. The bond of spiritual unity has been broken. It may be that today with all our centralisation, with all our culture—the basis of *Patria*—we feel ourselves less bound to one another than in centuries gone by. Class interests supersede general aspirations. In the old days the thing which bound all hearts together was religion, unique and intangible. The believer bore in his faith a pledge of brotherhood for all believers. He might journey through the whole of Spain, he might visit the cities and go into all the houses, in the roads he might come up against the most diverse kinds of travellers ; always, the believer recognized the believer. And the temples, in thousands—cathedrals, churches, sanctuaries, hermitages—were like spiritual inns for the wayfaring and the sorrowful. In those precincts, suffused with spiritual

life, the soul came upon a resting-place. Everywhere the believer was as if in his own house. Above mountains, plains, rivers, cities, floated one atmosphere of beliefs and hopes, breathed by all the citizens. And every heart was palpitating with one same longing, one same thirst, the thirst for ultimate salvation.

XXI

CASUISTRY (LA CASUISTICA)

The professor of whom we are about to speak led a simple life. Every day at the same hour he went to the University. In the University he taught Theology. His outward appearance was commonplace ; a thin beard, reddish, sparse, covered his face and ended in a point. On his eyes shone spectacles in a thick setting of tortoiseshell. Day after day the professor did the same things. He rose with the dawn, he lay down soon after nightfall. From morning to night, his steps and his actions were identical with those of the day before. The neighbours could have regulated their clocks by taking count of the moment when he opened his window at break of day, or came out of his house to go to the University, or lit his lamp

in the evening. The *caballero* lived entirely for his studies, he conversed but rarely with friends and acquaintances, he meditated in leisure and calm. And because his life, in solitude and in silence, was every day alike, the good professor began to confuse its incidents and actions. In the world of his memory everything unfolded on one identical plane. The movements and details of his daily life, being all exactly similar, began through contiguity to weld themselves into an inseparable whole. Often the professor did not know whether something which he had done one morning had been done then for the first time, or was only the memory of something he had done months ago. The doubt terrified him. He began to doubt his own existence and the reality of the things round him. He saw himself as a dreamer vaguely floating among phantoms.

And it was impossible to go back now ; he felt himself irremissibly chained to the diurnal habit created by himself. At twenty, he might have tried for freedom. He could not do it

now. To turn about and inaugurate another kind of life was a thought which his mind could not grasp. He would not be able to understand. He would feel like a foreigner in the new way of life. He must go on then, inevitably, to the end. Time gradually disappeared for him ; in the uniformity of his life non-essentials acquired a striking prominence. A little thing which unexpectedly introduced some slight alteration in his habits, moved him to the depth of his being. He dwelt long on the most fugitive details. Through meditation and silence his sensitiveness became acute. He was hurt by things which would slip unnoticed over the moral epidermis of others. The most minute lack of punctilio on the part of a colleague, or a faint discourtesy towards him committed by a friend, vexed him profoundly and made him sad. Even among his own relatives, his family or kindred, a disagreement with his opinion, a few sharp words, made him think that he was not the same as he used to be. Surely he was not the same ; his intelligence must be

weakening, his mind must be falling into decay, or perhaps he had never been worthy of esteem. Then he would get hold of books written by his colleagues and read them alongside of his own ; he wanted to see, by comparision, if what he had done was deserving of respect. And many a time, the inclination of his mind, now started on the slippery path of pessimism, made him see things which had no existence. He saw his work as perishable and mediocre ; it could not be compared with that of his companions. In sadness, a severe and gentle sadness, the *caballero* resigned himself. And on resigning, as a requital to himself for his failure, he gave his mind to being benevolent and tolerant. The smile of gratitude drawn from others by his kindnesses was the compensation which came to meet his imaginary intellectual mediocrity.

The days were always the same for the professor. He opened his window at the same hour in the morning ; he retired into his chamber to sleep at the same minute of every night. Tints or shades of colour are everything in life.

In the web of the moral world an almost imperceptible item suffices to give one value or another value to a deed. The good professor, for whom the non-essential towers so high, knows well the value of tint. Human actions vary according as they are tinged, finely, with these or with those colours. And in life, to estimate and to do justice to those variations, those shades of colouring in the most diversified and dissimilar cases, is to carry out a work of tolerance and humanity. The master has written many books, but his great work will be this book which he is preparing on the varieties and hues of actions. On the first page of the manuscript we read ; *Summa de casos de conciencia*. When the professor comes out in the morning to go to the University, he has already written fifteen or twenty pages. He walks slowly through the narrow streets. In the square, where the University rises, his pupils are waiting for him. They all greet him affectionately and go after him, following.

XXII

MILITARY POWER
(EL PODER MILITAR)

The more simply we can tell it the better. We tell the most heroic of the deeds of don Rodrigo. D. Rodrigo lives in a dismantled house. The walls are not hung with tapestries nor do fine carpets cover the floor. Of furniture there is little: a bed, three or four chairs and a chest. The manservant who waits on D. Rodrigo sleeps on a hard hurdle. He is as old as his master. D. Rodrigo has fought in Flanders and in Italy. He applied for an *habito** but they did not give it him. He went repeatedly, years since, to the courtyards of the Palace with a record of his services; but he

* The robes of the military orders. *Caballero del habito de Santiago*, a knight of the military order of Saint James.

met no patrons. Disillusioned, he withdrew from human intercourse. He lives in a narrow retired street, and his only friend is a sword cutler in the city. The sword cutler knows the poverty of the *hidalgo*. He knows that many a day passes without master or servant tasting a morsel of bread. Yet master and servant sally forth from the house every day, upright, dignified, with their swords slightly lifting the hem of the cloak. The *caballero* walks in front, and some few paces behind follows the manservant. In this order they arrive every day at the same hour at the cutler's shop. D. Rodrigo enters the shop and the manservant leaves him. Whither the squire directs his steps is unknown. Perchance to the gatehouse of a convent, or it may be to the servants' hall of a palace where he can count on finding friends. When he comes home at night, this faithful servant carries a small parcel under his arm, beneath the cloak.

D. Rodrigo has come into the cutler's little shop, as on other days. The guard of the

caballero's sword has suffered a certain deterioration. The sword is magnificent. It is of fine workmanship, made in Milan. The *caballero* is not possessed of riches ; but this sword—acquired in times of peace—is well worth a treasure-house. There are not two like it in the city. The sword has companioned the *caballero* since he was a youth. It fought for him in Italy and in Flanders. The sword cutler knows it well ; he will easily put it right. D. Rodrigo leaves it in the little shop. The next day, in the morning, a customer of the sword cutler steps in. He is a tall youth, elegant, and on his breast sparkles a star made of diamonds. The cutler has Don Rodrigo's sword in his hand. The youth examines it. The sword cutler and the gallant discuss. And the latter expresses a desire to possess the exquisite sword.

The clock has struck, it is time for the visit of the *caballero*. Far up the narrow street he is seen coming. He walks in front, erect and serene ; he is wearing a sword, an old one. His faithful squire follows. Now they are

inside the little shop. The master has taken hold of D. Rodrigo and carried him off into a corner. The two whisper. D. Rodrigo turns pale, he looks at the beautiful sword which is lying on a table. And suddenly he moves away from the armourer, lays hold of the sword, and in silence, dignified, loftier than ever, walks out of the shop without taking leave.

Military life is spirit. The most formidable factors in war are the spiritual factors. The military power of Spain was great when her armies, her generals, her soldiers were moved to enthusiasm by an ideal, an ideal which could be represented by gestures as small as that of the *caballero* of the sword. By the end of the sixteenth century the power, the force, the enthusiasm have already passed over to a new world beyond the seas.

XXIII

VASCONIA

The Basque country is beautiful and tranquil. Three exquisite things are in this lovable country—food for labourers, for invalids and for poets—bread, milk and silence. Pío Baroja, that friendly companion of literary life, has painted the Basque country marvellously. From Castilla, from lands of light, we go toward the gray mists of Vasconia. But on the way we have the pleasure of passing through the country of Alava. The country of Alava is pure and luminous. Her horizons are clear of clouds. On her plains we see the slender poplars of Burgós, of Segovia and of Toledo. The Alavesan country is a graceful transition between the classical scenery of Castilla and the romantic landscape of Vasconia. Everything in the

Alavesan country is moderate and restrained. Soon, a few steps farther on, we shall discern, in the mountains, loosening out from between the steep crags, the first gauze veils of mist. The vegetation begins to thicken. The sky has come down lower. The air is denser. The gray walls of the houses stand out from the verdure of the landscape. These Basque houses—built of rough blocks of stone—houses ancient and noble, give us a vital impression of the sixteenth century. We see these houses as we should have seen them had we lived in the sixteenth century. Nothing is interposed here between the moment when the house was built and this instant in which we look at it. The past does not dim our vision. No past exists here. The Vasconians are the young children of Spain. Like children they discover the world afresh every morning. Like children they delight in trying to startle ; in painting, in literature, in industry. Here alone is the populace instinctively gay ; their outlook is healthy and without a trace of sadness. The numerous advances of

modern industry are here allied with a primitive and childlike love of pleasure.

On the other hand, the air of Vasconia has favoured the durability of things. In Castilla the limpidity of the sky might be said to have helped towards the irradiation of material. The sky in Vasconia, low and dense, has compressed material things and hindered their irradiation. In Castilla, the transparency of the air makes us notice the smallest ravages of time, breaches, knocks, rifts, the rust on iron. In Vasconia the ambient air, damp, opaque, associates itself with the old buildings and dissimulates their ruins ; the very colour of the stone, dark, is a continuation of the ashen colour of the mist. In Castilla, fervid and turbulent, multitudes have come and gone in the cities ; they have been agitated ; impulses of momentous impetus have moved them. Castilla is like a garden after the crowd has passed over it, trampling down its beds and flower-borders. Vasconia has not had vehement multitudes ; her history, from its remote past, is silent ; her men have

gone forth individually, alone, towards the great enterprises of the sea. In Vasconia everything has favoured seclusion and permanence. In the peace of the landscape let us look at this great house, square and strong. Its walls are built with small blocks of stone. The eaves of the vaulted roof are broad and overhanging. A spacious balcony of wrought iron runs across the middle of the façade. Above the doorway, in letters sunk in the stone, we read: *Anno Domini MDLXXV. Tela minus feriunt, quae praevidentur. The prepared man shall never fail.* The *caballero* who dwelt in this mansion was ever vigilant. In the last civil war a fire destroyed the back portion of the house. Now, in the empty rooms, seeds and vegetables are drying. Silence fills the landscape. There breathes a profound calm. The old and noble house lifts itself up in the peace of the green country.

XXIV

CATALUÑA

Tot mirant a Catalunya
*S'ha sentit robar lo cor. . . **
JACINTO VERDAGUER.

Cataluña: thy luminous shores draw our gaze, the long gaze of the spirit. From Castilla and from Vasconia we see in the distance the band of gold and light of the Mediterranean coasts. From the highest point of Cataluña the indentation of the coast extends as far as the borders of Alicante. And in front lies our beloved Mallorca†; Mallorca, with the gold and the blue and the purple of the water in her deep creeks. Cataluña, thy name represents

* *Who looks on Catalunya*
Feels his heart stol'n away.

† Eng.: Majorca.

for Spain the life, tumult, eagerness, stir of the world through many centuries. On other seas thy men are sailing now. Already in the sixteenth century, the life of the world is taking other roads. But the harmony, the marvellous rhythm of ancient Greece, which from Greece came as far as here, these will be imperishable. Cataluña is Valencia, and it is Alicante, and it is Mallorca.

Cataluña has her mountains filled with solitude and her farms wherein tradition is unshakable ; her bell towers, white and square, come almost down to the blue waves. Valencia has her orange groves ; the leaves of the orange tree are lacquered ; amid the lustrous foliage the golden spheres gleam, or the soft little waxen flowers arrange their snow-white purity ; the air is tempered, luxurious, the light is blinding. Alicante has her almond and her olive trees. The olive trees of Alicante are not like those of Mallorca. Those of Alicante, carefully pruned and cleared, are oval in form : those of Mallorca are ugly, fantastic ; with their crooked trunks

and their branches mounting in tufts, they seem giants or monsters.

Almond trees grow in Cataluña, in Valencia, in Alicante and in Mallorca. The trees are fine and slender, they rise above the white strands. In no part of Spain are there almond trees bathed in so vivid a light as these. In no part have the horizons, beyond the smooth hills, such luminous perspectives. Things stand out, with all their details, from the remotest distances. The men are quick and agile, their understanding is keen, they live frugally. Cataluña, Valencia, Mallorca, Alicante ; whoso bears inborn the vision of your light on his retina, will never be able to forget you. That almond tree above the white stones—delicate and graceful—is the symbol of your delicacy and your grace.

XXV

THE POET'S LODGING
(EL APOSENTO DEL POETA)

As the door of the room is standing open, we can see, looking through it, part of the gallery of the courtyard. The courtyard is irradiated by the last beams of evening. Coming along the gallery we see a beautiful girl. In her hand she carries a salver, and on the salver a plate and a small jug. White napkins cover the plate and the jug. The girl passes on into the room. In a corner stands the bed, and close to the bed is a table. The poet went out a moment ago, he will not be back till midnight ; everything must be placed ready for his return. The girl leaves the salver with plate and jug on the table, then she moves slowly about the room. In the room are a desk and a cupboard with

books. A small door leads into the wardrobe. Hanging in the wardrobe we see suits of clothes and male accessories, fine broadcloth coats, a cloak of watered camlet for the rain, a second waterproof cloak, Gascon, doublets, velvet breeches. With a small brush the girl carefully tends one and another of these belongings. The bed is soft. The girl lays her hand on it, pressing lightly. Then, irresolute, she pauses in front of the desk. On the desk shines a broad white sheet. Some lines darken it. Close to the paper, in a small basket, lie half-a-dozen quills and a knife for cutting them. What books look out from the poet's shelves? The girl passes her hand over the back of the volumes ; she touches the paper whereon are written the verses ; finally, she seats herself in the armchair which stands before the desk. Seated, she leans forward as if to write, or lets herself fall back against the support. She enjoys the feeling of being seated in this big armchair. What books are in the cupboard? What does the poet read? In *La Dama Melindrosa,* of

Lope, two persons, Don Juan and his servant Carillo, are conversing on matters of erudition. Carillo has just quoted an opinion of Pliny. The following dialogue arises between master and servant:

—" Wherever did you hear
that bit of Pliny?
—Master,
So many men without brains
have devoted themselves to translation,
that now we fools know the same things
that get the wise so much thought of;
and we merit the same titles as they.
I've got him, in translation,
and Horace and Lucan too.
—*You* have read those men?
—But since they're all in Spanish
what is there to hinder me?
Why, my old sorrel spouts Latin!
Here they are.
—Well, really, it's diverting,
Sages world-renowned
seek Horace in Latin,
and he's lying in the stable!
O divine Horace!
that a groom should have read thee! "

Erudition is a small thing by the side of creation. The self-same Lope, in his prologue to the *Triunfo de la fé* speaks of persons who, not creators themselves, write against those who "invent". The essential in art is to create, to imagine, to invent. Master and servant continue their talk. Criticism—as in Sainte Beuve and as in Menendez y Pelayo—can also be creation.

"—Intellect then, and knowledge.
Are they nothing but caps and degrees
From Siguenza or from Valencia?
—The difference is
in the deluded public.
A sword? they call it ignorance.
A cap? They call it erudition.
—What an entertaining syllogism!
—But it's now fixed firm in the public mind.
—O this weary Spanishifying!"

O this weary Spanishifying! O how absurd an opinion, the opinion of those who think erudition a higher thing than creative fire! That exclamation made by the actor in Lope's

play is the best protest against the phrase *lay talent* applied to Cervantes. Lope, despite his erudition, feels himself the natural ally of Cervantes. Lope, in *El Premio del bien hablar,* calls Cervantes *" discreto "*. And this indeed is the adjective which best befits Cervantes. Cervantes was *discreto* in the sense which Calderon gives to the word, in *El gran teatro del Mundo. Discreto* in the sense of reasonable, sensible, wise. Oh, this weary Spanishifying! Erudition is not creative impetus. Nor is knowledge wisdom. And Cervantes is creator, and wise.

But the girl has got up out of the arm-chair and casts a look over the room. Everything is in order. In the growing darkness we can see the white patch of the plate and of the little porcelain jug.

XXVI

MAQUEDA

Maqueda is a town of few inhabitants. It may have two hundred fires. It belongs to the juridical district of Escalona, in the diocese of Toledo. It stands at a league's distance from Escalona ; not far off are Torrijos, Noves, Alamín, Quessimondo, Nombela, Almorox, Cadalso. In Nombela Philip II thought of building the monastery of San Lorenzo. In Torrijos Dª. Teresa Enriquez raised a church, she was the wife of a *contador** of the Catholic Kings. Of Cadalso it is said that D. Alvaro de Luna always passed it without stopping : the town belonged to his own estates ; a star-gazer had predicted that he would die on a *cadalso* (scaffold). Méntrida has wines, clear and fresh.

* *contador mayor*, president of the court of accounts in Spain.

In Maqueda you have cereals, oil and wine. They work the soil lightly, on the surface. They grind the olive on wheels of blood, and they squeeze the pulp in presses made against beams and corners. From day to day, in breaking up fresh earth, the ploughshare disinters Roman remains. A fortress was built in Maqueda in the time of the Arabs, it was repaired at the end of the tenth century by order of Almanzor ; the architect who restored it was Fathoben-Ibrahim, the same who constructed the mosques in Toledo. In 1010 a fierce battle raged at the foot of the castle of Maqueda. Today the castle is in ruins. The four outer walls, with four towers at the corners, are all that is left of the ancient fortress. From the height of the walls we catch a glimpse of the rivulet, between the trees, running in the depths of the glen.

In the town there was once a child king. Of all the historical memories of Maqueda, this is the one most in harmony with the place. The figure of this boy seems an image of the little town ; fugitive and modest. Enrique I was a

son of the noble victor of *Las Navas,* Alfonso VIII. He was eleven years old when he was proclaimed king. A rapacious magnate carried him off with violence, tearing him from the arms of one of his sisters. The little town with its castle looks from afar like a city, but its houses are diminished and poor. The boy has been already exalted to the throne ; but he is not yet king. He will never be king. And the little town will never be a city. The regent carried the boy from town to town, through the lands of Toledo and along the banks of the Duero ; by the presence of the King he facilitated his own exactions and wrongs. And they stayed, too, in Maqueda. The figure of the boy seems to flit across the little town like a delicate and graceful shadow. He must have run about among the trees of the valley, and by the borders of the stream. Upon the boy weighs all the glory of his heroic father. What brilliant pageantries are awaiting him in the future? His hours were already numbered. The workman who, in the pottery, is beginning to mould

a tile with a little potter's earth, cannot suspect that that handful of clay may be destined to deprive a kingdom of its monarch. The mason who is arranging tiles on a roof, never dreams that one of those tiles, falling, may be doomed to strike a King. In Palencia one day, in the June of 1217, a tile falls from a tower and kills Enrique I. The boy had not yet completed his fourteenth year.

In the twentieth century the hours flow by in Maqueda as they flowed by in the sixteenth century. A few more ruins now, and all the rest the same. In the town there may be a little more movement. Perhaps living among the workmen there might be some weavers and harness makers. The industries of wool and leather are the genuine industries of Spain. The nation's greatest riches are in her flocks. The flocks yield leather and wool in abundance. The wool, before it becomes transformed into cloth for the shops, passes through the hands of carders, combers, clippers, dyers, weavers, pressers, fullers. The leather is worked by

tanners, dressers, harness makers, glovers and bottle makers. Leather flasks and wine bags filled with wine or oil travel the twisted stony paths of Spain. Harnesses and trappings glisten with embroideries and big tassels made of red and green yarn. In the inns the leather bottles pass from hand to hand and drop down eager throats a little thread of wine.

Field labourers and townsmen work and suffer in Maqueda. Life has misfortunes everywhere. Life is the same in the twentieth as in the sixteenth century. In Maqueda in 1580, there would certainly be a *hidalgo* who has wasted his fortune in Toledo or in Madrid and who now lives here retired ; and a student, who awaits the moment for returning to his studies in Salamanca ; and a hunter who never hunts anything ; and a schemer who possesses a secret for the restoration of Spain. Towards 1523 there arrived in Maqueda a youth in search of employment ; he was called Lázaro, he took service in the house of a priest ; he had come from Salamanca across the sierra of Gredos

passing through Almorox. The priest lived but poorly. In the same way today there will arrive in the little town some boy seeking a living, separated from his parents. Life goes on in Maqueda, from century to century, always the same. The cornfields in the sixteenth century grow green, as now ; the tender wheat is transformed into tall stalks crowned with ears ; the harvests are reaped. From time to time, rarely, a piece of news reaches the town ; the Turk is threatening ; the Prince is dead ; the *Moriscos* have risen ; the *armada* has been sunk. The bells toll funereally once or twice in a month. The labourer begins anew to scatter the grain in the furrows ; the fields grow green afresh ; harvest time comes round ; the sickles —even as death harvests lives—move on their way, clipping the high tip-toed stalks.

XXVII

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY
(LA FILOSOFIA NATURAL)

The natural philosopher is a curious man. Natural philosophy is the philosophy which studies the secondary causes or properties of Nature. The natural philosopher is something akin to the decorator who in the Middle Ages filled the porticos of the Cathedrals, the capitals of the columns, the sedilia of the choirs, with flowers, plants and little monsters. The natural philosopher studies nature. In nature he is attracted by the rare peculiarities, the strange instances, the occult properties of things. Celestina, the good mother, was, without knowing it, a little bit of a natural philosopher. The whole sixteenth century, and

the whole seventeenth, is full of natural philosophers. They all read principally Aristotle, Pliny and Claudius Ælianus. But, have they ever seen the fabulous animals which they describe? The *echeneis* is a little fish which stops a ship in its progress. The *calamón* is like a swallow ; it makes its dwelling-place in the houses, and if there be therein an adulterer it instantly hangs itself. Who shall paint the prodigy of the unicorn? The unicorn—stupendous fact—makes obeisance before the virgins whom it meets on its way.

The natural philosopher has now a new scope for his perspectives : the discovery of the West Indies. Thence comes a great stream of marvellous things which joins the great stream that came from the Middle Ages and from pagan antiquity. But among the intricate confusion of his herbs, plants, stones and monsters the natural philosopher will from time to time insert a moral admonition, a dictate of prudence, a discreet injunction. And thus take birth those compilations—so much to the taste of the six-

teenth century—which resemble curious bazaars filled with rare things, where at intervals for the instruction of the spectators there sounds forth the voice of a sage philosopher. Such is the *Silva de varia lección,* of Pedro Mejía, published in 1542, reprinted many times, known all over Europe. "Of the wonderful property of a little animal, whose bite kills or heals with music", is the title of one chapter of the *Silva* of Mejía. And another: "Of the tritons and nereids whom we call mermen, and whether it be true that they exist, and some notable instances of this". And another: "How the lion is afraid of a cock and of other very weak things, and what reason can be given for this". It is said that Montaigne read this book. The book, apart from its marvellous examples, contains profitable doctrine. What difference is there between the *Silva* and the *Essais*? In the *Essais* there is a personal element which is lacking in the *Silva*. In the *Essais* we find laid open to view, developed, amply expanded, the personality of the author. The personality of

the author—and that is the great secret of the *Essais*—in those things which he has in common with the universal and enduring personality of man.

XXVIII

THE LIBRARIES
(LAS LIBRERIAS)

Antonio Oudin, in his *Dialogos,* published in Paris in 1650, has a phrase which will enchant the bibliophiles. The author says, speaking of Medina del Campo, that there, there are " famous libraries ". Throughout the sixteenth century printing has been spreading all over Spain. There are presses in Burgos, Toledo, Valencia, Tarragona, Sevilla. From those presses issue strong bulky folios, as well as the tiniest little plump books. Renowned in the sixteenth century are the printing presses of the Portonaris, in Salamanca, and that of Juan Brocario, in Alcalá de Henares. In Medina del Campo, that noble Castilian city, there were indeed great and famous libraries. Today, after centuries,

it causes pofound emotion in us bibliophiles, if in a second-hand bookshop we come upon a booklet of the sixteenth century. We had hunted it the whole length of the catalogues ; two or three times it slipped through our fingers ; a librarian from whom we wanted to buy it had just sold it ; a friend tells us he has seen a copy in such and such a library ; but the friend is mistaken, he has seen another work, or another unimportant edition of this work. And one day when least we expect it, looking for something else, we find our hands resting on a volume ; absentmindedly we examine it, and we cannot repress a quick exclamation. The longed-for book is in our hands. On the frontispiece we read : " In Salamanca, in the house of Domingo de Portonaris, 1575 ".

Now imagine a bibliophile transported by magic to the famous libraries—public or private—of Medina del Campo. What immense joy! What splendid treasure! Our purse is not heavy enough to buy as many books as we want. And if it is not a library of books for sale—if it is what we now call a *biblioteca*—

our cloak is not large enough to enable us to conceal and carry off four, six or eight volumes. The astonished bibliophile goes from one book-stand to another, he takes books out of all ; he looks at them and looks again ; against the light he examines the filigree of the paper ; he passes his hand gently over the parchment and over the leather.

Bibliographic material is inexhaustible. Great is the passion of the bibliophile ; but there are books which can escape the cupidity of the impassioned. This we might say above all of those very small books which enjoy playing tricks on the most sagacious and universal of book-connoisseurs. The tiny books are untamable little devils. What collector of Quevedo knows the edition of *La fortuna con seso,* made in Zaragoza the same year as the first edition, in 1650, by the same publishers? And who among those who are best acquainted with the bibliography of Quevedo has heard of the edition of *La Politica de Dios,* made in Milán by Juan Bautista Bidelo, in the identical year of the first edition of Zaragoza, that of 1626.

XXIX

CORSAIRS (CORSARIOS)

From the mountain all the way to the coast runs a deep gorge. At the bottom is seen winding a small rivulet. The sides of the gorge are of reddish earth. The sandy shore—all along the coast—is of a golden colour. Lope de Vega, in three lines, has let us feel the water, as it comes and goes, softly, above the smooth sand. In his comedy *Don Gonzalo de Córdoba,* one of the characters exclaims: "How pleasant is the sea!" And another replies:

Over the wet sands
It seems to come in, to go out,
*For at play, at play is the water.**

* *Con las arenas mojadas,*
Parece entrando y saliendo,
Que está retozando el agua.

The earthy sides of the gorge are red ; the sky is blue. The sands of the shore are golden ; and the sea is a deep indigo. Yonder in the distance are seen coming across the sea two white sails. Gradually the two sails are getting a little larger. They travel slowly, they do not seem to move. All is silence in the vast and luminous panorama. On a short promontory jutting into the sea, rises a small square tower.

In the serenity of morning nothing disturbs the marvellous quiet. In the gravel bed of the rivulet straggling towards the sea comes into view a herd of goats. The grass is scanty. The goats scattering here and there bite the shrubs and from time to time give a sudden toss of the head. In the silence we hear the sound of a flageolet. The white sails come on through the blue sea. A shepherd boy is piping on the flageolet. When he has played a little he gives it to a shepherd girl who is walking beside him. The shepherdess plays for another moment and gives it back, laughing, to the youth. The lad places his lips where the shepherdess had placed

her's and begins piping again. The two laugh merrily. The sails are still making towards the coast. The little she-kids root up the brambles, with violent kicks. How softly the waters advance and retire above the fine sand!

Here on the moistened arena
See, coming in, going out,
At play, at play is the water.

In the luminous splendour the sea reverberates with an intensity of blue. The coast of golden sands reaches far to right and to left forming an immense concave. The white sails have neared, they are close to the strand. From the vessels people have landed who run across the sand and disappear in the gorge. A moment after, the scattered goats hurriedly come together again. They toss their heads as before among the shrubs. A dog, head in air, gazing after the receding boats, utters melancholy yelps. The sails are becoming smaller every moment. From the low tower on the promontory rises a

column of smoke. Nothing disturbs the serenity of the scene. On the coast, farther in, on another little hill, is rising a second tuft of smoke. Not a cloud is to be seen in the sky. Farther off, there below, on the top of a small rise, we discern yet another column of white vapour. The sails are already quite tiny on the horizon. The goats are feeding alone. The dog renews his mournful yelps. The plumes of smoke from the fires kindled on the hillocks go on slowly mounting, in the serene stillness of morning.

XXX

GLORY (LA GLORIA)

What was the conception of glory in the sixteenth century? What is glory for a Spaniard of that century and of later times? The supreme glory is the glory of action. The glory of the intellect—scientific glory, literary glory—hardly exists. If it exists it is of so little value, so subordinated to the other, that it can be ignored. Spain is a profoundly christian nation. For christianity the highest pinnacle of life is virtue. In Spain everything contributes to the exaltation of the deed above the thought. Everything has worked together, from the beginnings of history, for the triumph of action over intelligence. The landscape, the configuration of the earth—so diverse in so many parts—the Spaniard's way of living, the warlike enterprises, the conquest of America, taken all over, everything impels to action. Christianity is in harmony with the

innermost depths of the life of Spain. The Renaissance, which gives the primacy to intelligence, could take no deep root in Spanish soil. To the intellectual speculation of other peoples, we opposed a will power which culminates in virtue. The ideals were in absolute antagonism. In *El Héroe,* of Gracián, all kinds of heroism are examined. That of arms earns the approbation and homage of the author. Military heroism is action at its highest. Nevertheless on reaching the last page of the book, Gracián writes: "To be a hero of the world is little or nothing. To be a hero of heaven is much; to whose great Monarch be the praise, be the honour, be the glory". Can anyone affirm that the ideal of intelligence is superior to the ideal of virtue? It is absurd to incriminate Spain on account of her scientific unfruitfulness; her road was other. And it is weak simplicity—or an excess of generosity—in the champions of Spain, to go and place themselves for her defence, on the same ground as that whereon the partisans of intellectualism choose to plan out the problem.

XXXI

THE MISSIONARIES
(LOS MISIONEROS)

This twilight now approaching, the twilight of evening, never again will the monk watch its approach from his cell. Never again will he see that thin band of light, golden, soft, high up on the courtyard wall. How many times at this hour, from his cell, has the *religioso* gazed upon those last splendours of evening? And now he shall see them no more. Ten years he has been in the monastery. Ever since the day of his profession, he has had a deep longing for the coming of this moment. Now it has come. The monk has gathered his things together into a little bundle. The few books which he possesses have been handed over, some to the monastery library, and others as gifts to

his companions. When the *religioso* is gone and when time has gone by, the companion reading in one of those books will remember him with emotion. " Where will he be at this moment? "—he will think—. " What will have become of him? How many souls will he have conquered by now for heaven? " The cell is clean and cleared of everything ; the bundle of things is lying upon a bench. The monk's gaze ranges round the white bare walls of the room ; he wants to carry away with him a last vision of these white walls. Tomorrow, at break of day, he will set out for the city ; there he will join other companions ; they will all make the journey together. This is the last night on which he will sleep in his cell. Soon, along the roads of Spain, a troop of men brim full of faith will go in search of the sea. Across the immense sea they will then sail towards the unknown. What meaning have the names of Persia, China, Japan for the loyal *religiosos*? From yonder come terrible news from time to time ; but faith is not dismayed, nor terrified.

Yonder they go, from Spain, these faithful monks, towards martyrdom, towards death. To the new world now discovered they go too, and there they will evangelise the people. All have left the cells of their various convents. Martyrdom and death count as nothing for the missionaries. Spain is ardent in her faith. The faith of Spain is borne to all the ends of the earth by these *religiosos*. Among all Spaniards fighting outside their country, these are the most self-denying. Some battle for kingdoms ; others in virgin soil seek gold. These *religiosos* are impelled by charity. And yonder they go, along the roads leading to the coasts, soon to sail across the immense seas in search of the unknown.

XXXII

THE POOR FARMER
(EL POBRE LABRADOR)

The poor farmer lives in Castilla, in Tierra de Campos in the Bierzo,* in the Vera de Plasencia, in Andalucía, in Cataluña, in Galacia. The poor farmer may be poor through lack of possessions ; but in the sixteenth century—and in the seventeenth—he was poor owing to other circumstances. Life in the country is real life. The farmer has everything at his disposal. Country life is independent and at the same time social. We have in the country our beloved solitude, now and then broken by welcome intercourse. The houses stand alone, and far apart ; but by footpaths and short cuts it is easy to get quickly from one to another. The farmer is

* Bierzo, a valley in the province of León. (Hence Bierzo, a kind of linen manufactured there.)

king on his property. He has bread, wine, milk, honey, oil. With the timber of his trees he constructs the doors and windows, the furniture and movables of his house. The oil from his olive trees lights him. His sheep give him wool for clothing. There is flax ready to be transformed into white linen ; on it will stand the bread, and between its folds we take our rest. The physic of the farmer is the medicinal herb. For his devotions wax gives him light, the waxen taper which shines for his festivities and shines for his hours of sorrow. The poor farmer lives an independent life on his lands ; a life regulated by the sun. The sun is unfailing in his ordinances ;—he is neither hasty nor negligent. Attuned to such a standard the life of the farmer is all symmetry and regularity. It is in the country that rule and order are most spontaneous and solid. Tradition has a firmer hold. The farm labourer knows the country minutely ; it is enjoyable to talk with him upon rural subjects. The loquacity of a *señor* is a thing we are obliged to endure ; that of a hind

we can bring to an end when we please. "It is worse work bearing with a dull lord than with a stupid rustic,"—said Fray Antonio de Guevara in a letter to the *conde de Benavente*—; "for the gentleman drives you crazy, while the simple bumpkin makes you laugh ; and besides, you can tell the one to stop talking, with the other you have to wait till he finishes." The poor farmer may be poor for reasons other than his poverty. By the end of the sixteenth century the abandonment of country life has set in. The cities entice the farm hands. The cities are splendid in the sixteenth century. New edifices appear. In the large squares, many of them surrounded by arcades, arise those beautiful structures. The rustic sets out for the city. He is tempted by the wars and the conquest of America. Farm labourers are getting scarce in the country. The *Mesta** carries off all the privileges. On the farmer weigh all the burdens. His lands, he cannot enclose them ; herds and flocks come in upon them to graze ; they eat

* *Mesta :* see note on page 68.

the stalks and destroy the vines ; vagabonds thieve the fruit from his boundaries, troops of soldiers tread down the harvests ; they come into the houses for plunder ; they steal the hams hanging in the chimney ; they carry off the hens, concealing them in their wide breeches ; usually they ravish the girls. Life in the country is not happy. Already in the sixteenth century farming has begun to decline. And the farmers are the mainstay of the Fatherland.

XXXIII

A SAINT (UN SANTO)

Brother Román is a humble servant of God. They never leave him in peace. He is followed and beset by the multitude. He wears the habit of Saint Francis and he lives in a city monastery. On the conventual map of Spain, the first monasteries which we see are the city monasteries. Next come those raised in the environs of the town ; such are, that of Santa Cruz in Segovia ; that of Santo Tomás in Avila ; the Carthusians of Burgos and Granada. Still farther from the cities, in solitary regions called *desiertos,* other monasteries arise. And at the far end of the spiritual scale, as being the most austere, come the small hermitages which are built in close proximity to the *desiertos,* and

are inhabited by anchorites. Most of these lone monasteries, *desiertos,* in Spain have been founded by Carmelites. We may count that of Bolarque—between Pestrana and Buendía—as the first and most famous of all ; and then those of our Lady of the Snows, in the mountains of Ronda, that of the Batuecas, that of the Cardón, in Cataluña. Monasteries arise in the cities and in the wilds. Brother Román dwells in one of the city monasteries. He is not allowed to rest for an instant. Crowds seek him out and harass him. The habit which he wears is in rags every week afresh, they cut pieces out of it with scissors, or violently tear off strips. The brother smiles and exclaims: "Did you ever see such foolishness?" He smiles ingenuously, like a child. He knows nothing of the world, Brother Román. His simplicity is marvellous. When he goes from one city to another, the great lords receive him into their houses. The multitude invades the rooms and comes as far as the table where the brother is eating ; thy embrace him, crowd upon him, and cut

pieces out of his habit. Brother Román has a smile of unspeakable sweetness for all. He calls his body the little ass, " the assikin ". He does not desire to give his body any gratification. Philip II meeting him in the street makes him come up into his coach, but Brother Román at once gets down again. " I do not want "—he says—" to give this taste of vain-glory to the assikin." His despotism is gentle. When he lays his hand, smiling, on the shoulder of an enraged man, the wrath vanishes. He always goes barefoot ; he eats a little bread and some cooked herbs ; his cell is four meters square. Brother Román is almost always outside the monastery. During a great pestilence which came upon the city, while all were fleeing he tended the sick and carried the dead on his shoulders. He visits and consoles the prisoners. If in the early morning he comes upon a forsaken child, he protects it, rocks it in his arms and takes his stand at the church doors to beg for the little thing. Brother Román is always smiling. He smiles all the time, with a smile

of ineffable goodness. His enemy is *the assikin*, but he knows how to tame and mortify it. When he dies, the multitude will break forth into lamentations, will burst into floods of tears.

XXXIV

THE MULTITUDE
(LA MUCHEDUMBRE)

Brother Román is dead. The news spreads quickly through the town and the outlying country. The tidings reach the farthest depths of the mountains. Along the roads and foot-paths the peasants come to the city. Old men come, women, youths and children. The gray sacks and smock frocks of the men mingle with the yellow, green and blue skirts of the women. In the city the crowd fills the great square. We are in the small hours of morning. Brother Román has been dead two days. His body lies in the cathedral. They have placed him in the central chapel, behind the high bars of wrought iron ; the beautiful grating is locked. Brother Román, his head turned a little to one

side, seems asleep. His rigid hands, the fingers clasped, support a crucifix. This same morning, the burial is to be. The cathedral doors are still shut. The broad square is overflowing with an anxiously expectant multitude. In the blackness of the crowd we note the accents, blue, yellow and green, of the women's garb. The moments pass slowly. Now and then some small incident makes a sudden commotion among the populace. All heads turn in the direction whence the clamour comes. Then again there is silence. The balconies are full of spectators, some are even on the roofs. Of a sudden, from the empty balcony of a house—a house with all windows and doors closed—someone sends forth great cries. The crowd turns towards the balcony. All are silent. In the balcony is seen a man, young, tall and graceful. He has a long beard. He is enveloped in a large loose garment of fur. His black curling hair comes down to his shoulders. With his left hand the youth lifts a crucifix up towards heaven, with the right hand he gesticulates vigorously. On hearing

the first cries, all have fallen silent. Over the vast square, filled full with the multitude, comes a deep hush. With the crucifix in his left hand, with the right hand extended towards the people, the anchorite calls aloud :—*Domine Deus*! He pauses, and then goes on, in the same strong powerful voice ; *Domine Deus, salutis meae, in die clamavi et nocte coram te.* The force of the voice is such, and such the pathos of the intonation, that the multitude is dominated. The gracious energy of the young monk subdues them all. All are shaken by the cries of the hermit. Tears fall from their eyes ; the women weep ; the children weep ; all cry aloud ; an immense clamour surges up from the square. In the isolated balcony the anchorite goes on sending forth his cries :—*Intret in conspectu tuo oratio mea : inclina aurem tuam ad precen meam.* . . . "Let my prayer reach unto Thee, give ear, Lord, to my supplications." In this sorrowful hour, in presence of the crowd, the rugged, formidable poetry of David finds a magnificent interpreter in the mystical hermit.

The people shout, groan, invoke and weep. *Domine Deus, Domine Deus!* reiterates the powerful voice of the anchorite. And the multitude, shaken, anguished, repeats after him the same words. *Domine Deus, Domine Deus!* they all voice aloud in tremendous clamour. The sky was radiant, and already the morning sun was bathing the white stones of the cathedral.

XXXV

A CLEARING IN THE FOREST (CLARO EN EL BOSQUE)

In the evening stillness the smoke moves upward slowly. Not the faintest little scroll loosens off from the compact, slender column, rising through limpid air. The forest stretches out on all sides. And in the forest, in this wide glade, is resting a legion of soldiers. Spain is far, very far ; away beyond the seas. The commander of the troop is sitting on the trunk of a tree. On the great fire they are roasting bleeding flesh. The horses feed on the grass, or reach up and nibble the tree branches. A moment ago the troops came out of the wood. They have been marching all day. The Commander was a stone-mason in Spain ; he was working in the cathedral of Burgos ; owing to

a dispute he crossed the seas ; undaunted, he succeeded in placing himself at the head of a company of soldiers. This man, now resting here, has made a unique mark in history. Since the world began, no one has carried out a feat of greater fortitude than he. Now with a legion of soldiers, now all alone ; now with arms, now weaponless ; at times ragged and barefoot ; amid divers tribes in this transmarine world he has covered immense tracks of land. He has vanquished formidable obstacles ; towering walls of sleek rock which shut off the way and which he had need to scale ; high table-lands where the intense cold and the rarity of the air made the hours a torment ; rain in floods inundating everything and making it impossible for weeks at a time to light a fire ; hillsides of clay, smoothed by the rushing water, whereon the feet kept sliding and slipping down ; deep ravines with impetuous roaring torrents below, which he had to cross on all fours over trunks of trees ; immense plains where the dry yellow grass reflected a burning sun ; great quagmires wherein a man sinks up to the waist ; rivers of

enormous breadth, ploughed by him in rough and fragile skiffs. This Spaniard seated here in the twilight, tranquil, calm, has done what none other in our planet has done. Emperors, Kings, great warriors, sublime heroes have lived and died ; none in courage, energy, perseverance, serenity of spirit, has equalled this humble Spaniard. And around him he has no courtiers, no royal guards, no magnificent cohort. He neither wears brocade, nor drinks out of gold, nor will he lie tonight on a bed of holland and damask.

Throughout the coming night the Commander and his army will rest in the forest clearing. In the beginning of the *Æneid,*—that poem which speaks of a world unknown and mysterious— ; in the beginning of the *Æneid,* Æneas and his companions, after furious storms, arrive at a delightful island, and rest while the deer killed by the huntsmen are being roasted. In the island there is a thick wood ; water, fresh and sweet, flows in a grotto. Æneas and his companions, and the descendants of Æneas, are to be the founders of a vast empire. By

means of the Spanish captain and his comrades, a splendid civilization is to spring forth from a virgin world. In the forest glade all are resting. Near at hand is the sea with his tempests. The rivers are enormous. The mountains rise inaccessible. All day the Spaniards have been marching through the woods. The light of the sun hardly penetrates the depths of the forest. Great trunks, fallen years and years ago, are decaying and turning into black earth. Masses of foliage cover trunks and branches as with tapestry ; like strips and cords fastening the green curtain of leaves, they go from trunk to trunk, cross each other in the air, climb as far as the tree tops and fall in festoons, swinging, with their long flexible sprays. From time to time the air is rent by the shrill cry of a bird, and there is seen, sudden, crossing swiftly above the greenery, a plumaged fan, golden, green and blue. Now and then, in the silence, among the dry leaves, comes a sound like the crushing of paper, and there gleams out for a moment a piece of lustrous skin, smooth, flexible, like fine chain armour worked in delicate colours.

XXXVI

THE FAMOUS "DECADENCE" (LA FAMOSA DECADENCIA)

The idea of decadence is no new thing in Spain. Spaniards and foreigners, for a long time back, have enlarged on the Spanish decadence. Let us react against this idea. There has been no such decadence. At what date do they choose to presume its existence? They presume it at the very time when twenty new nations, of Spanish race, of Spanish tongue, are peopling a continent. No, the idea of our decadence is not new; eminent men have collaborated in the creation of the conception of decadence, erudite men, historians, scholars. Seeing that the idea claims centuries of antiquity, is now the moment for correcting it? Is it

now that we are about to see its unreality? Yes, now ; because—turning our gaze towards America—now it is that we are beginning to acquire consciousness of the strength and fecundity of Spain. Even so, it is now—this is relevant though we say it in passing—that Spain is acquiring full consciousness of her splendid beauty ; and for the initiation of this consciousness (and the discovery of Castilla) we are indebted, as for so many other things, to the Catalanes, to Parceriso and his friends. The knowledge gained by the experiment of America ought to be conclusive for the man of action and the man of thought. When, after many days spent among American maps and books, books of geography and voyages, we come back to our habitual ways of thought, we experience an extraordinary sensation. We have been journeying over the immense areas of the Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia. We have been in Mexico. We have visited the smaller nations. We have sailed round the great and the small *Antillas*. The immense variety of

the landscapes dazzled us. Now it all seems diminutive, shrunk, dwarfed. Without having actually been in America we feel home sickness for its manifold and splendid panoramas. They all seem restricted and small, the geographical spaces and the movements of men. If we imagine ourselves in a city of the Argentine, of Peru, of Mexico, of Chile, of Bolivia, of Colombia, of Venezuela ; we are shaken by a strange sensation ; it is as if an inward vibration came down to us from the past, through a long chain of forefathers.

There has been no decadence. A world is newly discovered. Twenty nations are created. One single language effaces a multitude of indigenous languages. Vast works of irrigation are constructed. Roads are planned. Woods are cleared, land is broken up and cultivated. High mountains are scaled, rivers of immense breadth are overpassed. Multitudes are instructed and trained. Municipal institutions, all alike, are disseminated over thousands of towns and cities. Industry, commerce, navigation, agricul-

ture, the care of flocks, all spring into life on a new portion of the planet, enriching peoples and nations. And who carried out this gigantic work? All the nations of Europe joined together? France, England, Italy, Germany, Austria, Russia, all united in one supreme and titanic effort? No; one nation, one nation alone; alone, with help from nobody; Spain. And how many inhabitants had Spain after founding the greatest of modern empires? We must not limit our vision to the area of the Peninsular. Spain is the Peninsula and the twenty American peoples. Spain, in the discovery and colonisation of America, created an annex which was to become greater than the mother house. It cannot be said that a Bank is broken because it removes its funds from one house to another. Never, at any moment, had we anything to learn from Europe. There was nothing for which we needed Europe. It was we who were Europe and not the other nations; or at least we were it—and continue to be it—as much as the other nations. Our ideal was as

exalted and as legitimate as the ideal of other European countries.

The idea of decadence will disappear in proportion as the spiritual distance between Spain and America also disappears—the detachment consequent on two or three centuries of negligence. Yes, the genesis of the conception of decadence is far from being new. The atmosphere, in past centuries, was conducive to its development. The nation was saturated with ascetic doctrine. Life is frail and sad ; earthly treasures are worthless, man is a compendium of miseries. The transition was easy from the racial and general to the particular and circumstantial. Actual Spanish affairs had to be subjected to the same criterion of renunciation. If the whole universe were despicable, what did a new world matter? The strange thing was, not that we should have perceived Spain's waste of herself within the peninsular boundary, but that we should have failed to perceive, that till now we should not even have begun to perceive, the prodigy of the blood-letting and

spreading of Spain. What we did notice, acutely and painfully, was the home faults, idleness, presumption, aridity, incapacity. Our whole sensibility was polarised in that direction. While foreigners—notably in France and England—through political rivalry, through an antagonistic ideal, were pressing the theory of our decadence, we on our side kept reiterating our moans. And as a crowning touch, to complete the desolate picture, the idea took rise that decadence is a thing foredoomed and inevitable. The idea had its origin in classical antiquity. The idea was defied by the principle of free will. Yet, amid the subtleties of first and second causes, Gracián and Saavedra Fajardo, among others, supported it in terms of seductive vigour and charm. The one talks of an " unresting wheel ", and the other of the " looms of eternity " whereon is woven the web of fate whose thread we cannot break.

XXXVII

PALACES, RUINS
(PALACIOS, RUINAS)

Traveller: it is the hour for resting a moment. This is the white stone on which the traveller will sit down. The wide country is solitary in this twilight time. Close to the stone rises a group of poplars. In the heat of the day the poplars give shade to some ruins. This, which was a magnificent country house, erected in the Renaissance, is now a broken wall. How many delightful hours must have been passed among the palace walls which once stood here! Under the trees bordering the roadways the coaches of the *señores* would move slowly along; perchance on an ambling palfrey would come riding, gay and graceful, the lady of the house. Traveller: it

is the hour of meditation beside the ruins. The wide country is solitary. The soft light, yellow, gilded by sunset, slips obliquely along the earth's surface. And within a few minutes the sun will have finally disappeared behind the far hill. The green poplars rise quite close to the tumble-down ruined wall. It was a splendid palace, this ruin. In the sixteenth century all these palaces were shining with the lustre of freshness. Spain was full of gorgeous palaces. The stone was newly worked. It had the whiteness of snow. The traceries, in the cloisters and courtyards of the palaces, must have looked as if they had been cut out in the whitest of white paper.

Masons and sculptors in the narrow passages and workshops made a sonorous and rhythmical noise with their chisels and their picks. The stone was worked with tender fancy. Out of the great rough marble blocks, dragged from the hills, wrenched from the quarries, came forth, one after another, griffins, shells, children, birds, cherubs, fruits, flowers. Fervently the

artist would pass his hands over all those little white figures which he had just finished creating, still covered with a light fine dust. In the spaces between the pilasters, on the columns, in the windows, on the friezes, on the pilasters behind the columns, swiftly appeared that whole picturesque and varied world of living beings and plants. The palaces shone resplendent. They were the outcome of a marvellous combination of ardours in handworkmanship—coming from masons, stone-cutters, iron-forgers, workers on gilt, painters, sculptors—which has disappeared, maybe for ever, from the human race.

If from an imaginary watch tower we could at that time have surveyed the cities of Spain, our dear cities, we should have seen the sparkle of the white palaces scattered over them in profusion. Traveller, time has been passing, centuries have gone by. Were the palaces of our Spain more to be admired then, or are they more beautiful now? Now they bear the sweet patina of time, they have the melancholy

fascination of age. Their stones speak to us now as then they could not speak, they tell the tragedy of lingering decay. Traveller: it is the hour of meditation beside the ruins, and here in the lonely country, this ruined wall of a palace which was, gives us a theme for our meditations. Centuries have gone by. Stricken in years, the palace has crumbled away; yet near, by the side of the ruins, like a smile from eternity, stands this group of delicate poplars, trembling lightly through all their leaves in the breath of the dying evening.

XXXVIII

THE REDEMPTION OF CAPTIVES (REDENCION DE CAUTIVOS)

The life of this monk can be told in few words. In the world he had been a much respected *caballero* of rank and position. There was no kinder man in the whole city. He never despaired in adversity. He fulfilled his duties with exactitude. He had one sole weakness, he loved money too well. In order to lay up riches he imposed rough tasks on himself. In his house everything was parsimonious. The servants were always thin. The *caballero* exhausted himself in praises of frugality in order to cloak his avarice. Everyone liked him in the city, everyone was charmed by his manners, but his avarice was a cause of sadness to his friends and

relations. The *caballero* himself recognised his fault and promised amendment. His repentant intentions were always of short duration. On one occasion his friends and relatives spoke with the Bishop of the diocese ; the Bishop summoned the *caballero*; the two communed at great length. The following day the *caballero* gave a dinner to the poor. The astonished city watched the sight. The relations and friends of the *caballero* congratulated one another. But it was a fugitive contrition. You may be able to tear away a rake from his surroundings ; you may make an angry man gentle ; an envious man may feel himself delivered from his gnawing trouble by your reasonings. But there is no way by which you can reach an avaricious man and get him to renounce his passion. Two days after the dinner the *caballero* dropped back into his old habits.

One day the news came that an intimate friend of the *caballero* was returning to the city. The friend had been a prisoner on African soil. He had spent fifteen years in captivity. From

the garden where he worked he could see the hills of Spain.

From distant African shores
Far from his own gardens
The forced labourer sees
*The high mountains of Spain.**

For fifteen years the prisoner had been moving in a circle round and round the machinery of a draw-well. His bare feet had made a deep circular hollow in the earth. Far in the distance he could see Spanish earth. Throughout those fifteen years of slavery the captive never had a change of work. Attempts to ransom him came to nothing. His family was poor. The *caballero* of the city and the slave were intimate friends. Perhaps the *caballero* could help with a portion of his wealth towards the ransom of his friend. The *caballero* did not do so. At last some Trinitarian monks redeemed the slave. He is

* *De las africanas playas,*
Alejado de sus huertas,
Mira el forzado hortelano
De España las altas sierras.

now on the soil of Spain. He is about to arrive at the city. He has arrived at the city and the *caballero* is informed of the return of his old comrade. The *caballero* goes into the house where the captive is staying with his family. Quickly and with outstretched arms he runs forward to welcome his friend. The slave remains motionless. Still young, his hair is white and his eyes have a frightened look though they see no one. The *caballero* stands transfixed, like one in a trance, facing his friend. And suddenly the captive, mechanically, without uttering a word, begins to go round and round the room with his head down as if he were moving round a draw-well. . . .

On the following day the *caballero* walked into the Trinitarian monastery which lies within the city; he was preceded by two servants bearing a heavy coffer. He did not come home from the monastery. Some time after, habited in the white tunic and black cloak of the order, the *caballero* was seen taking his way towards Africa.

XXXIX

PEDAGOGY (LA PEDAGOGIA)

The master has just appeared on the threshold. He is an old man, small, lean and rather bent. His head is smooth, shining. His eyes are small and brilliant. He keeps his hands inside the sleeves of his habit. When he appears in the doorway all the novices promptly rise to their feet ; they had been seated, both small boys and youths, on a bench round the room. The master lifts his hand with a light gesture. All the novices fix their gaze upon him. All sit down again. The lesson begins. Smiling and agile, the master goes to and fro, from one side to another. His footsteps are light. The novices are already all clothed in their habits. The master, rapid and silent, has stopped before one of the smaller boys. He places a hand

affectionately on his shoulder and asks him a question. The questioned boy thinks for a moment. And then he answers. On hearing the answer—a correct answer—the master shakes his head and frowns. All the pupils suddenly look serious and turn towards their companion. The master, in grave words, says that the pupil's answer is not right. The pupil, affectionately reproved, blushes. At once the master smiles. And now the reproof, again affectionately worded, turns out to be, not for the non-existent fault whose existence the master had pretended, but for a real fault, the fault, on the part of the pupil, of over-assurance and confidence in his own judgment. He had answered well. But in doing so he had caught something of the master's own authoritative manner. And that is exactly what this nimble and silent little old gentleman least of all desires. The trick is repeated every two or three days. The pupil is always surprised afresh by the master. And the master always smiles and shakes his head disapproving.

The lesson continues. The pupils explain their difficulties to the teacher. The room has some windows looking out over the fields. We can see the country, spacious and green. The pure fresh air comes in through the broad apertures. The students ask questions and the master answers. The dialogue is cordial and animated. At times the master stops before a boy ; he looks at him in silence, takes him gently by both arms and draws him towards a window ; then looks at him in the light as if he did not know him. Presently, in a rather ironical voice, slyly, he utters an exclamation. The master has observed a fault in the boy and wants to point it out in serious yet kindly fashion.

In a multitude of Spanish monasteries, at this same hour, in the sixteenth century, the masters are instructing their pupils. In the history of Spanish pedagogy the teaching given by the religious orders ought to be remembered. A century later, in 1676, the Jesuit Pedro de Mercado dedicates some perceptive pages to

pedagogy, in his book *Práctica de los ministerios eclesiasticos*. " See to it "—says Mercado to the teacher—" that the pupils ask you about their difficulties ; and when they ask, answer them in a friendly way ; because if they are irritated by the answers they will not risk bringing questions to you ; and through not questioning they will remain in their ignorance."

XL

THE REAL ESPAÑOLA

(LA VERDADERA ESPAÑOLA)

The aged *señora* lives in the outskirts of the city ; in a part called *Los Pradillos* (the Little Meadows) ; we reach this district after crossing a stream by way of the Roman bridge. Where now stands a flour factory, there stood, in 1860, the old slaughter-house. The slaughter-house was built on lands which had been occupied from 1640 to 1802 by the monastery of San Agustín. In 1570, before the time of the monastery, there arose on this spot a group of houses. Those dwellings went by the name of *the houses of Sancho Gil.* Sancho Gil was a bishop of the diocese ; but it is not known whether the houses belonged to the bishop or to

a Jewish banker of the same name. In 1880, a violent polemic was started between two local journals, one republican and the other conservative, on the subject of the demolition of the old slaughter-house. The house in which the *anciana* lived had a small entrance-hall ; at the far end of it you saw a wooden staircase ; a narrow balcony, also of wood, ran round the wall ; a small door—the door of the *anciana's* apartment—opened on to this gallery. The aged *señora* leaves the house every evening at twilight and walks to the city. She crosses the bridge and climbs the *Cuesta de Trajineros* (the Waggoners' Slope). After that she directs her steps towards the cathedral. The *anciana* walks a little bit slowly ; in one hand she carries a white crook, and in the other, hidden beneath her cloak, a cruet of oil. Everyone in the city knows this little old lady. Within the cathedral a lamp is burning, in the chapel of Protection. The light in the lamp has not been extinguished for a hundred years. Just in the same way as this *anciana* empties her cruet into the cup of

the lamp, so her mother, and her mother's mother, emptied it before her. The little light has never gone out. At the hour when the *señora* penetrates into the cathedral, the great aisles lie in shadow. The high windows are paling in the last splendours of evening.

Lope de Vega, in his comedy *El Molino* (the Mill), makes a duchess, excited, angry, say to one of her ladies:

> *. . . For fain with a sword alone*
> *And the fury of my breast,*
> *I would do a deed, Theodora,*
> *Worthy a woman of Spain.**

In another comedy by the same Lope, *La Moza de cantaro* (The Pitcher Girl), dona Maria de Guzmán y Portocarrero (the heroine disguised as a servant girl), kills a man who has insulted her father. The *anciana* who is taking

* *. . . Que con una espada sola*
Y la furia de ni pecho.
Hiciera, Teodora, un hecho
De verdadera española.

her way to the cathedral has never gone to those extremes ; but she has been a valiant woman and a spirited. Now, she is wrinkled and bent ; time was, she captivated everyone with the grace of her figure and the beauty of her face. No one is left to her in this world. Of the three sons born to her, one died in Flanders ; the second went out to the Indies and there ended his days ; the third met his death in a pestilence which came upon the city. The *señora* bore with fortitude all her adversities. Among them, that which shook her most deeply was the unfaithfulness of her husband. There had been a moment when she was on the point of doing the deed which Lope's duchess would fain have done.

The true *española* is a lover of home. During part of the year she likes to live in the country. She keeps her home spotless. She nurses her children. She does white work. She embellishes the mending with ingenious and quaint darning designs. She can make preserves. She cares tenderly for the sick. She dresses simply. When

she has passed the age of thirty she is seen only in dark colours. She neither wastes her substance nor stints that which is needful for the comfort of the house. They could not say of her: "She throws away the flour and saves the ashes". In her character, underneath kindliness, underneath the most gracious courtesy, we come upon a foundation of indomitable energy. And that impression of impetuosity—as we saw it in the severe and vigorous landscape—that impression of fortitude allied with grace and with the most delicate sensitiveness, is just what gives to the woman of Spain her insuperable attraction. She—impetuous and sensitive—is the *verdadera española* of whom Lope de Vega speaks.

The *anciana* who lives in the houses of Sancho Gil—the bishop or the banker—goes to the cathedral every evening. Unchanging is her faith. Unchanging has been her love. She has been tender and strong. Her hands, thin now and worn—what beautiful hands they once were!—keep the little light shining bright in

the lamp. One evening, on entering the chapel, the *anciana* suddenly felt ill. On the following day they came upon her, dead. The light of the lamp had gone out.

XLI

EPILOGUE BY THE SEA
(EPILOGO ANTE EL MAR)

Sempronio.—Has dicho?
Calixto.—Cuan brevemente pude.*
La Celestina, Acto I.

The dream is ended. We are in the same worldly drawing-room where we were when we began to dream. Before us extends the great sea. The night—blind and cold—has thrown its shadows over the wide expanse of water. For a moment, our spirit was drawn away from actual things. The surrounding reality ceased to exist for us. We come back now to the present world. The stars are shining in the black vault. We carried with us into our dream somewhat of enthusiasm and affection.

* "Hast said?"
"As briefly as I could."

Past epochs cannot be understood without that touch of sincere sympathy. Epochs far from us, other than ours, cannot be studied on the basis of the ideas, the sentiments, the aspirations of the present. A people cannot be condemned for having followed a different route from that of other nations. How can we tell in what direction humanity is moving! How can we tell what may be the logical and fatal outcome, after centuries and centuries, of an ideal which we are reverencing and protecting now! Seen from the remote perspective of a future centuries and centuries hence, how will the ideal of Spain appear, the ideal maintained in the times upon which we have for a moment been meditating? Must intelligence triumph in humanity or must will triumph? We have been dreaming for an instant in the Spain of the past. For our meditations we have selected definite men, definite circumstances, definite deeds. We have not tried to embrace a whole epoch. We have contented ourselves with dashing off a few quick strokes—deemed characteristic by us—to indicate the

temperament, the disposition of a people. And with deep cordiality we have fluttered, butterfly-like, over those men and their surroundings. Our spirit has wandered lightly from one to another. Perhaps we felt afraid to " settle " or linger, lest our forehead should take on the frown of a too impassioned meditation. In all cordiality, with warm feeling, we placed ourselves—for a moment—on the side of the past ; with piety we contemplated the men and the deeds of a remote century ; our guide was the logic of sympathy ; with the logic of sympathy we were able to explain things which seem inexplicable to the determined adversaries of that period. Nevertheless, reason was keeping watch within us. In making our defence of will, we could not renounce the light of intelligence. As artists and men of feeling, we were attracted by the spectacle of the past ; as workers of intelligence, modest workers in the ranks of intelligence, we felt ourselves rooted in a world which is modern. And during the dream our spirit roved, eager, trying to comprehend, from

one side to the other. Yes, perhaps we felt afraid to prolong our stay. Had we done so, had we meditated with passion, our serenity, our judgment, our equilibrium, had been lost. We must needs then have enlisted strenuously on the side of the past or of the present. Unawares, partiality must needs have taken possession of our spirit. And with profound emotion, in these first moments of night, before the obscured sea, the thought came to us of spiritual peace, spiritual peace which grants to people of all views, to artists of all tendencies, a serene joy in the most varied intellectual phenomena. The stars were shining in the black sky. A beacon, at brief intervals, moved its long band of bright white light across the immense sea in the darkness. And in our spirit, its hour of meditation gone by, we felt the inner conflict resolving itself. The inner conflict, sign of an ominous antinomianism—herald of restlessness and misery—resolved itself, into a code of respect and of tolerance.

Read in the *Real Academia Española* on the 26th of October, 1924.

XLII

TRANSLATOR'S APOLOGIA

I began this translation not thinking of publication (the book was written for Spaniards, by a Spaniard), but with a personal motive, that of introducing *Una Hora de España* to certain of my friends. In order that they might be brought into Spain, not Spain into England, I had to renounce (not wholly but to some extent) " paraphrase ", " the English idiom ", " the equivalent from the English standpoint ". No such equivalent is possible here without losing the Spanish spirit. Those who dislike all translation other than " a free English paraphrase " will not approve this little book. But they will I hope excuse it, when they remember that it is not meant for them.

I have not been lazy. It is harder work to

protect a thing from too much change than to change it ; but I have respected and kept the Spanish form of Spanish proper names (with some concessive and inconsistent exceptions!) ; and I have, once in a way, retained a " Latin " word where a " Saxon " one, fashionable and intolerant, might be accounted " better " ; (remembering among other instances what a disappointment it had been to me on reading Hoby, to find that in giving us the delightful, vigorous, breezy English of the " Courtier ", he had somehow missed the *Cortigiano*).

Rules and tastes in the matter of translation vary so much, that one may perhaps be allowed to follow one's own instincts. Faithfulness to this author precludes adherence to any hard and fast theory of translation. So, in this book, when a Spanish word, simple, important, essential, impossible of translation or paraphrase without the loss of its delicate momentary point, when such a word can at best be but delicately *mis*represented in English, and when it is intelligible to the English reader if left in

Spanish, I sometimes leave it in Spanish, choosing the lesser jar against an atmosphere so sensitive that at moments the translator grudges her own approach.

Azorin is not exacting. For his land, and for its people—some of whom he reveals to us in these medallions and sketches—all that he would ask is " respect " and " tolerance ". But he himself brings something more beautiful than either to his Spaniards and Spain of the sixteenth century ; something an echo of which is the only excuse for this humble little attempt at translation ; he brings love. It is this which has made them live again today, for Spain. And it was this which brought them to life within a small circle round an English fireside, and enabled him from afar to hold his listeners there spell-bound, as they pierced the veil of their reader's first try at putting the *Hora* into English, stumbling and hesitating all the way. To that little circle I dedicate the translation. May I count on him for a kind and forgiving *tolerancia*?

Alice Raleigh, Oxford, 1930.

The thanks of the translator are gratefully given to Mr. G. A. Kolkhorst, M.A., Lecturer in Spanish in the University of Oxford, without whose kindly and perceptive revision, various ignorant mistakes and blunders would have remained in the published text.

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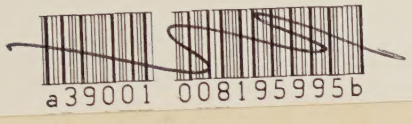

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